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on 11 March, 2020

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

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Early Review of Volumes I. and II., in the Times Literary Supplement

'This strong, strange poem fulfils aspirations. . . . Heroic duels, closely modelled on Homeric fights; bits of pagan mythology, like Woden's visit to the abode of Hel; Brennus's passage of the Alps; the Song of Sigor, a beautiful version of the myth of Crispin and Agygia, which we should have liked to quote in full, as a proof of Mr. Doughty's handling of an idyllic theme. . . . We hope, however, that enough has been quoted to show that this is no ordinary poem, such as minor bards endowed with a cultivated taste and a select and recondite vocabulary could write. It is work of an altogether higher order. It may be that its subject and manner will narrow the circle of its admirers in an age which is quick to protest that it has no leisure for epics; but the fit and few will give thanks for a poet.'

The Dawn in Britain

BY CHARLES M. DOUGHTY

AUTHOR OF

'TRAVELS IN ARABIA DESERTA'

VOLUME III

53588

LONDON: DUCKWORTH & CO.

3 HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN

1906

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Edinburgh : T. and A. CONSTABLE, Printers to His Majesty

BOOK IX

ARGUMENT

DUNEDA, king of Duffreynt. Mormael, his nephew, is slain by angry gods. The Master of the Armoric ship's tale. Bladyn's lay, in the king's hall.

Duneda's dream. Ithobal's words among the Iscan ship-folk. Tegid, waggoner. Miracle of this man's corn multiplied, at Joseph's word. The king sends for the strangers. In the king's hall, they see Aesgar sitting, the great Dumnonian druid. Aesgar, with bitter accusing words, burdeneth the shipwrecked strangers. Two men, eremites, disciples of Eryr, come in. Lords of Dumnonians, faring to war, take an oath together, in the hands of king Duneda.

Certain of the brethren, which went forth to pray, enter in a sacred wood. The madman Llys. Druids lead them on to Aesgar's hall. Shalum reproves Aesgar's malicious questioning. Departing thence, druids bring them forth, in a path, whereby are dens of some wild beasts; which are loosed out upon them! The saints behold the Lord's angel, standing, to save them. They return hastily to the king, in Isca. Aesgar publisheth the druids' ban. Duneda disposeth him, to send his stranger-guests, unto sanctuary Avalon.

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

BOOK IX

At afternoon, approach, in shining chariots,
Lords of Duffreynt; whom called forth king Duneda,
Entreat of warfare, with his enemies.
They sit, in moot-hall, soon, round the high walls.
Tall be, long yellow-haired, these Duffreynt lords;
And shine, on all their necks, wreaths of red gold.
Each lord bears, in his hand, a silver cup;
And sits, by every one, his land's high druid.
Was king of fair Duffreynt, before Duneda,
Stout Kamloc; who, (his father's son,) in fight,
Fell slain, what day Silures, enemies,
Harried, to Isca walls! Not bearded, yet,
Duneda, riding in the royal chariot,
Covered him, with his body, as with a targe.
Wounded, to death, fell Kamloc, from his war-cart.
Duneda leapt down, on the bloody grass,

With furious spear and glaive, great slaughter made;
And heaped, with slain chief foes, his brother dead.
Duneda hath no son, his brother's sons,
Are the king's heirs. His daughter, he espoused,
To the elder, Morag, come to manly years.
But Mormael, younger, that was nobler born,
Unto their father's royal seat, aspired.
Perfumed, unprofitable, the young prince,
Like as a gilded bowstring unto war;
Mormael enflamed, one eve, among his peers,
With treacherous mead, cried *Tanist*, truculent!
He would be, in spite were even of the gods.
Word which doth sound, (in speech of these West Britons,)
A king's companion; that, under him, hath
Power of the sword, and word of the king's mouth:
And should succeed, hereafter, to his room.
Heard gods, offended; and decreed his death!
And was that night the eve of the New Year.
Lo, in to-morrow's pomp, he foremost rides;
Which conveys Aesgar, chief Dumnonian druid,
To that cave's mouth, where, yearly, like one dead,
He, lapped in a beast's hide, mote enter in,
Offering himself his nation's sacrifice,
To die, before their god: whilst all the folk

Cry out, Another it might please the god!
Then, suddenly, all years, was wont some one decease.
But Mormael's startling steed, at that great voice,
Was taken with fury; and were it heaven's wrath,
Which him oppressed, there durst no man approach;
Nor his high kin, to save the prince's life:
(For Morag was, that moon, in Verulamion,
Which, for his germain, would his life have given;)
Whose steed is on him fallen. All bruised to death,
Fool-hardy Mormael lies! Whilst stood still Britons,
Amazed; was Kamloc's son laid, of priests, druids,
Yet warm, in that year's grave, already made!
Duneda called then Morag, from Caer Verulam;
Where he, in court of king Cunobelin,
Learns noble thews and martial discipline.
King of the royal tribe of Catuvelaunians,
Now is Cunobelin named, the Lord of Britain;
As, whilom, was his grandsire Cassiobellan:
And, lately, when, to Cæsar, sent Cunobelin,
An embassage; went stout Morag, with his son,
Prince Togodumnos, unto sovereign Rome;
For friendship was twixt the young noble men

Soon fetched-in, the lord's servants, little boards,
They set-on meat, before Duneda's guests;

Unto each his portion ; sheep's flesh in the broth,
Seethed chine of boar, and loaves, in bascads white.
The Master, eats, of that Armoric ship,
With them, in the king's hall and audience.
And, after meat, he tells, asked leave to speak ;
How, to Gaul's shore, arrived new Roman army !
He saw Rome's legions ordered at sea strand,
In battle ray. He saw Caligula Cæsar ;
With whom stood that Icenian BERICOS,
King, whom expulsed his people ; and Red Adminius,
Fugitive, which base son is to king Cunobelin.
The madding Roman emperor, then, commanded ;
That sound loud clarions, onset of the legions,
And shout, to battle, soldiers ; and with arms,
Of Rome, they smite sea-billows, insolent :
And sith, they gather cockles, longs the strand,
Spoils of Isle Britain! Then, Caligula, Cæsar,
Was rowed, in gilded barge, of hundred oars,
In triple ranks, some little from the land ;
Where, standing on the poop, he cast in chains,
And cried ; I bind thee captive, sea, to Rome!
And bade his lictors, smite salt waves, with rods.

In gold and purple, then, upstanding, clothed,
In all their audience, he oration made;
Lauding his legions, now victorious, arms;
Exceeding all before them. Sith, his steed,
Caligula, (having temple-priests ordained,
That should burn incense to his godhead!) steed,
Which wont him bear, a god, o'er land and seas;
He, emperor, aha! a Roman Consul made.
Mad Gaius turned, with dread of all, to shore;
That steed's proud crest, with whelky pearls, behanged:
And men, in his imperial name, with store,
Ride post; to consecrate, unto Rome's chief gods.
Wherefore, of all men, now is scorned, fell Cæsar:
And who, allies, marched with him, mock Rome's nan
And there be, mongst his captains, which conspire
Caligula's death. Moreo'er, left certain cohorts,
Mad Cæsar, in that place; he them commanded,
To build, in memory of his great conquest,
Unto all succeeding ages, tower, whose walls,
Framed, to similitude of high sieging engine,
Standing on neck of the vast ocean-stream,
Should threaten still sea-waves! And he, who
Cæsar,
Now, Husband-of-the-moon! himself proclaims,
Wills, that new star thereon, to ships, should flame.

He Britain deems, another world subdued ;
Because that Island's princes, fugitives ;
In Rome, submit them. Is Caligula he,
Who, erewhile, bridged a sea-gulf, with strong argines ;
And guised, like blue sea-god, thereover, rode,
In four-horsed chariot : and his soldiers bade,
Thrust down Rome's togate rabble, in salt billows !
The Duffreynt princes, silent, sit, good space ;
Because none first would speak. All dread great Rome,
Which mastering now the arms of the whole world.
Whilst yet they sit, drinking brown dulcet mead ;
Duneda's scouts come in, with word from Severn,
Silures marched ; with whom joined neighbour tribes,
In arms ; whose hostile spears them seemed a wood.
The king sends runners, then, to his allies,
Stout Durotriges,[1] dwellers by sea-waves ;
And Dobuni,[2] bordering nigh great Severn flood ;
To join, with him, gainst swart Silures' threat.
And day, and place, he sets where all should meet.
Then part Dumnonian lords, in shrill, bright, chariots.

Bethought him, after supper, king Duneda,

[1] The people of Dorset. [2] The people of Gloucestershire.

Of those few shipwrecked strangers; and bade Kamlan,
Them call anew. That steward soon the brethren,
Brings in; and leads, to sit, in honoured place,
Before the sire: and should interpret Pistos.
Then Kamlan mingled mead, it bears to all,
Who, chief ones, sit on polished stools, the walls
Around. And, longs the midst of this moot-hall,
Burn hearthpits: hall, whose roof-tree stained and crowned,
Hath hospitable smoke of many days;
And shields thereon ben hanged, and helms and arms.
Bears king Duneda mantle royal, white,
Of wolf-whelps' skins; which fastened, with broad brooch,
Like to a golden keel, on his large breast,
With silver sail; for he is lord of ships.
The king's high stool, with ivory of whale's white tooth,
Is fair inlaid; whose arms be carven heads,
With eyes of pearl, of gaping strange sea-beasts.
The boards are graved, with many a quaint device,
Of panting hounds and flying harts and snakes.
At the king's hand, stand young men, seemly dight,
Champions of stature; whose long tawny glibs,
Ben, helm-like, knotted on their comely heads:

Are runners, which, with ready looks, await,
Leaning on long war-spears, their lord's behests.
Two great white alans couch, at the king's feet.
  Duneda, with mild voice, asks of the strangers,
Lacked they aught, in their lodging, mead or meat?
What is their nation's name, their trade of life;
And what that far-off strand, whence they outsailed?
  Stands Pistos, to interpret; and he spake,
Praise to the Father of all worlds and gods!
Whose servants ben these men. Their land, is Jewry,
Duneda, in East half of wide-lying Earth.
And with the Son of Righteousness, these conversed,
Therein, have, many days, as friends with Friend:
And breath is in them, of the holy gods.
  Their shipfare he records; how hurled from land,
And covered of great waves: in winter season,
Through Midland-deep, their starless ship was driven;
And buffeted, sith, in windy Gulf of Gaul:
And how, in whelming waves, the storm-chaced vessel,
Had seemed go down the waterfloods, beneath;
And lie in deep sea-ground, midst fearful beasts,

Amongst the dead. Yet them their mighty God,
Thence, took ; and saved forth, to Armoric haven :
But were they, soon, compelled, to sea, again.
Sith, came we, wafted to the island Sena ;
Where weary were our hearts. To other isles,
Arrived, sea-currents cast us o'er to Britain.
Thus he ; and whilst he spake, the king Duneda
Looks, kindly, on the strangers. Seems him, sit
They, in radiance, such as bards sing of the gods !
He bade then Pistos tell them, in their speech,
How might they alway, at their liking, dwell,
With him, in Isca : (and seeing, now, so far-off,
Their home lies.) Else, with hospitable gifts,
He would them send soon, to Gaul's Continent ;
Whence Romans might translate them, to their Province.
Upspake that Master of Armoric ship ;
And also we put in to Corbelo ;
And heard, from point to point, these things rehearsed.
Then one stood forth, in the king's lower hall,
Among the people ; man, by his smirched face,
Some smith seems, and come in that vessel was.
He wrought at Corbelo, and there mended pots,

What time, quoth he, the strangers' ship drave in,
Covered with salt; and lay aboard our staithe.
He saw those shipwrecked: and heard crying out,
Upon them druids: that, from the Bourne-of-Night,
Dread spirits, were those arrived unto their coast;
That banes should bring in on them, blights and death.
Loud spake that smith, then, for himself; he taught
Is, to smite arms, and every work of brass;
Would aught the king Duneda of metal work.
  Questioned; that Master of the traffic ship,
Responds; In all ports of Armoric coast,
Is this opinion found; that certain spirits,
Wont beat on doors of fisher-folk, by night;
That needs must rise; and down, to strand, wend forth;
Where see they, deep-fraught, ready, their own barks;
And mote those, as compelled, them enter in;
And, else, they seeing right naught, with oars, row forth.
And this is Ferry-of-souls, to the Dead-isles;
And sitting, at their helms, ben gods of death.
  Heavy are the waves, wherethrough, those swiftly pass,
Unto a Land-of-mist; where, toucht to shore,

Both names and voices of dead wights, they hear;
Which there, out of their loaden keels, disbark.
Did not they bear, thus, Death out from mainland,
Should Death, those deem, with them, alway, abide.
Yea, and certain have seen gods, stand on that strand!
Supposed the men of Corbelo; for their hew,
And uncouth keel of strange Phœnician vessel,
And reverend countenance; that those strangers were
(And seemed whose faces shine as the twilight,)
Some gods of death! Duneda bade, then, pour
Out mead, and call chief singer of the bards;
That, with some new thing, he might glad their hearts.

The king's young men bear mead round, and brown ale,
Unto all who will. Whilst yet these Britons drink,
Bard Bladyn, son of Rohan, is come in.

His locks, as flower of broom, raught low adown,
Unto his girdle-stead. His tunic lawn,
His rotchet gaudy green. Before him, bears,
A child, his shrill-stringed, trembling, instrument.
At the king's footstool, stays the royal bard ;
Where, twixt two pillars, is the singer's seat ;
And, turning to Duneda, Bladyn drinks
The proffered cup, of golden mead, full, out.

Tempering his well-taught hand, the dreaming wires,
Then Bladyn quoth, in the Dumnonians' ears,
Is meet, that kings, which, sprung of heavenly seed,
Mongst men bear rule, show bounty unto strangers ;
Whom send, oft-time, just gods, to prove our hearts.
Yea, and somewhiles, lords, unwitting, at their hearths,
Have entertained, as guests, those blesséd ones.
He stayed, and on the shipwrecked strangers, looked !

Hath Bladyn heard of their long voyage ; he toucht,
Anew, with cunning hands, his speaking wires,
Which thrill the hearers' ears ! and dream their hearts.
He Sena sings, isle fleeting in Gaul's seas.
Which from old time is sacred to Night-god,
And the clear moon : whose steepling cliffs abode
Of mocking aery Spirits. To man who cries,
From sea ; whereby his bark doth pass, Farewell !
Yell Farewell ! hundred unto him again.

There ceased the bard ; for many from without,
Noised that the king, for Bladyn, sent, to-night,
Throng in, to the mead-hall, with shoveling feet.
But seeing, would sing the vates of vain gods,
Pistos asked license, for the weary strangers ;
Who risen, Duneda bade them, well to rest ;
Good night! And Kamlan ! give them, daily rate,
Of all things, which behoveful to king's guests.
And this hears, nothing loath, his lord's behests ;
For, since the strangers entered in his house,
Him seemed, some blesséd gods healed his old griefs.
Took Bladyn then his crowth, anew, and toucht
The warbeling strings ; and weaved them, with his hands.
He chants, of valiant Cloten, prince of Kent.
To see his royal kin, in Gaul's mainland,
And visit foreign nations, Cloten sailed,
With warlike navy. But the prince's keel,
Whose pilot, in thick mist, had lost his course,
Was parted from the rest. Howbe, was this
Suspect, of treachery ; in that king of Kent,
His son, for grievous guilt, had judged to death.
Driving, at misadventure, they were met,
Of Frisic yawls, full of fierce weaponed wights ;

And whose long weather-boards shingled with shields !
With these, that pirates were, they fight, for life ;
Few, against many. And he, young valorous prince,
Hurt of a grapnel, which was hurled, inboard ;
Being now his most men slain, was taken, uneath ;
By might of many inthronging champions.
And when those all, in the king's ship, had spoiled ;
They Cloten, did, on thwart row-bank, compel,
To drag an oar. But, displeased, the sea-gods
Loosed a main-tempest, on those pirate keels ;
So that o'er-beat, the rugged risen waves,
Their boards. Nor labouring they, at sea, all night,
Might win to any haven. When gainst day, was ;
They, fallen mongst breakers, split on some sharp skerries :
And every pirate soul drenched on their boards.
But Cloten, from the row-lock, who washt forth
Was, with his oar, whereto those bound him ; rides,
It embraced, all that day, the windy surges,
(And he yet lives, by favour of some god !)
And the next night. Nigh noon, of second morrow,
Last cast the Cantion prince was, where, mongst rocks,
(That tempest ceased,) more gently runs the tide.
Young Cloten seemed, all swollen, some cold white corse,

Which ebbing waves, on that shole sand, depose.
There warms him summer's sun ; and turns, with pain,
A flickering life, unto his deadly flesh.
Like worm, he creeps, then, on the steepy strand ;
His cords sith frets, and severs, on sharp rocks ;
So finds, where fallen, together, two cliff-craigs
Make a sea-cave. There, gathered much salt moss,
Now in that hold, lies Cloten warm and sleeps :
That day outsleeps ; and yet the long night sleeps ;
Till murmuring, at his feet, mongst pebble stones,
The rising tide affrays him, in the gloom.
But pitying, gods ; to whom young Cloten prays,
Bade Sleep, anew, his heavy eyelids close.
He slumbers, till a new sun climbs in heaven.
Prince of the noble youth of warlike Kent,
He dreams, he walks, yet, in his father's court ;
And sees there maiden, like to goddess bright,
Daughter of kings ; for she, with gold, is crowned.
Him thought, he followed her, then, with long grief ;
Because, how swift soe'er he moved his feet,
He might not her attain, through all the world !
He wakes, of all things, bare, and sighs ; but joys,
That he is free, alwere on forlorn coast.
So went forth view, what this were for a shore :
And if, therein, that human kindness were.

Before the dawning ray, was Esla risen.
She, with sweet birds, hath sung her early lays,
To Sena's god ; and beet his temple-fires.
By steepy headlands, thence, lo, she dismounts !
Like to a falcon gentle ; so is light,
Or like sleep-walker, who none peril sees,
Adown the high-ribbed rocks, her virgin tread.
Would, after tempest, Esla, yet a child,
For a sweet incense, gather amber-stone,
And whelky shells ; and play the strand along.
Esla is priestess, of the moon, in Sena ;
And daughter to a king of Gaul's mainland.
Her garments, long, up-gathered, of white lawn ;
Now, on this shore, sweet maiden, she paced down :
So skips, from stone, on her white feet, to stone ;
And run salt waves, those gracious steps to kiss.
And, oft, in her disport, she, virgin, stoops,
On the white sand, to take up carnalines,
Or shells, like rosebuds, hid in coral moss.
Then, half-adawed, she stands, like hind, at gaze ;
And looketh her about ! She weens, she heard,
As moan ; or the wind was, mongst fallen crags ?
And for that sudden fear, she would have fled.
Like startled roe, yet listens ! To her ears,
Then comes of plaint and song, as mingled voice ;

Yet nothing like to her weird sisters' voice;
Though quake her tender joints, she nigher draws:
And spies some quick thing, like herself, in cave;
Save that, seems, this hath face of some sea-moss,
O'ergrown; and middle girt of tangle, hath;
For, in the sun, the prince had cast his cloth.
And, from a child, hath Esla seen no man.
Whilst marvelling yet, she shrinks, as fowl, from hawk;
Lifts Cloten suppliant hands, as to a goddess!
For, such, he deems her, of this unknown coast.
He, of grace, her prays, she tell him, where he is?
Makes answer Esla; This is island Sena:
Whereat he dreads the more; and, by the gods,
Bewray him not, conjures! whether she nymph
Were, of these shores; or, else, her nourisheth bread,
Which brings forth foster-bosom of earth's ground.
And saith, how hath he twice died, in these days:
Once, in salt-waves; once, by his enemies.
And, piteous, promised Esla. She, sweet child,
Abhors her insane sisters' murderous mood.
Nor this, as they, one wrinkled, hideous;
But fairest wight, which she hath seen, on ground:
Such as, records her thought, her father was!
Wherefore, she kissed him; and did melt their hearts.

The prince, then cheerfully beholding Esla,
Her heavenly aspect, knew to be the same,
Which him revealed was, in his long night vision.
Yet deems he her, surely, of some celestial seed.
Him Esla warns, keep close ; lest startled mews,
With shrieks, and the wild terns, bewray his life ;
To her weird sisters, peeping from the cliffs.
Like as sand-piper runs, at the salt brinks ;
So dancing she, on her white nimble feet,
To gather, hies, as the weird sisters wont,
Some wild meat. Cometh then, soon, again, sweet Esla :
And, to him, brings, her lapfull, of sea-eggs,
Salads and samphires of the windy cliffs :
And now mote she return, lest she were missed.
But she, at even, will come unto this place,
With weed and meat. A little thing, then asked
Cloten, which came into his sudden thought :
(He óf some, here, cast timber, would knit float ;
And night-time, scape from Sena, and this sea-death ;)
Where might he any willow-withies find ?
From him, by sharp wild crags, she lightly upclimbs.
And seemed, on those steep cliffs, some hovering bird,
That mounts ! To sacred pool, is Esla went,
Round-grown of sallows, by their temple-path.

There, with sharp flint, she severs golden rods,
So, running, hurls her bundles, from the rocks.
Then certain her weird sisters chanced to pass;
Turning, towards noon, from Sena's sacred hearth.
They, seeing her do so, gan Esla call!
But she, a divine madness feigned anon;
Taught of some god, which her, to-day, bestraught,
Leaps mongst rough crags. As guileful lapwing lures,
Feet of crude fowler, from her fledgelings' nest;
So them she leads, so them misleads; as danced
She merry round, (whose murderous meaning is;
Seize on her tender limbs, and rend, and cast
Them, to sea's running waves, from these dread brinks!)
They hoary women, past now age and spent,
By cranks and windles, from those perilous rocks;
Aye crying, like to one wildered, were those wands,
Whence she a lattice to her bower would frame;
But that aye turn to serpents, in her hands;
Wherefore, for are they worms! she flings them forth,
Which eat the bramble-buds and whortle-berries!
Nor fears death Esla: she would die, to save,
Whom her soul loves. Have outstripped her light feet,

Their cold lean joints. And now this passion past,
There fell a blindness, on them, from the gods.

Wakes Esla, all day, so she impatient is,
To keep his life, which hid under these brinks.
When erst, from heaven, the molten stars look forth;
After the sunny rays, she ready is;
Nor fears, where, like to walls, downhangs the cliff,
Descend; and seemed, by day, none footing was.
She hastes, for marked she mount the tide, beneath.
She goeth down, by sharp scaurs, such force hath love;
And lightly oft she depends, by corded roots:
So that sea-gods, beholding, bate their breaths.
The chilling wind, her golden hairs outbloweth.
She, bound about her, long fringed-mantle bears;
That sea-cast One, to cover from the cold.
Like as who finds some fallen fledgeling bird,
Out of the nest; or weanling of hedge-beast,
Uplifts, and home, in pious hands, it bears,
And cherisheth: and aye, twixt doubt he is
And hope, to nourish up; that such not miss,
Of kindly life, whereto born on the earth:
Much more, thou child, thing goodliest having found,

On sea's waste strand, tremblest and durst, uneath,
To him thou lovest, now call, for uncouth dread.
O joy, when dimly, at last, beholds each one,
The other's semblant, in this doubtful gloom.
Then whispered speech, sweet knitting of true palms,
Already knit their hearts. Her mantle, warm,
Of wadmel, then she splayed about them both.
They creep together, in that fear and cold,
In dim sea-cave. Smiles out, in firmament,
The hoary girdled, infinite, night of stars,
Above them: like as when, in sweet spring-time,
With wind-flowers white, some glade is storied seen;
Whereas, from part to part, like silver stream,
Shine hemlocks, stichworts, sign of former path.
To her innocent bosom, she him gathers, warm;
And girded, each, of other's arms, they sleep.
But Cloten, waking, spread, to heaven, his palms,
Calling high gods, to witness of his truth;
His being, knit to this nymph, for life and death.
O'ermuch she travailled hath, to-day, and run;
Nor, child, wist, risen, she hath known a man:
Yet feels that new in her, as were unmeet,
She as tofore, on Sena's sacred hearth,
Wait; wherefore gan she weep; but fears him wake.
The moon's clear lamp shines, o'er wide silver deep;

When, kneeling, from first sleep, upon her knees,
On the pure sand, she purer Esla prays.
She morrow nigh sees, by these heavenly signs;
So, priestess, went, to bathe her gentle limbs.
Before her, fleeting, lo, in the dark tide,
Lies thing uncouth. She gathers then to her,
Her garments; and calls Cloten to the shore;
Upon whose eyelids sleep, sent from the gods,
Yet heavy lies. That timber float, it is,
Which waves uplift, the prince, at eve, gan knit,
On the shole strand: and now apparelled is,
With well-tressed bulwarks of those golden rods;
A work, the whilst they slept, for love of Esla,
Of the sea-nymphs; ready with helms and oars!
Come, from sea-cave; and standing by loved Esla,
Feels Cloten whole his hurt. In all these things,
The heavens show favour to his enterprise.
Though Esla do these justling waves affray,
Her liever were die, with him, in the sea,
Than live from him apart; she wots not why.
Then, embarked Cloten, in his manly arms,
His love, his spouse. Anon, the prince thrust out;
The whilst they pray, both, to the watery gods.
Quaked Sena's cliffs; for wakes the island-god.
Rose the weird sisters nine, in their 'lone bowers;

And to the everbrenning hearth, they run ;
Where taking count, (low burns the sacred flame !)
There faileth none of them, but Esla, alone ;
Whose name sounds, from the rumbling oracle.
Then course they all, with fearful yelling cries,
To the cliff-brow ; where, turned to barking hounds,
Those, frantic, leap, upon the utmost crags,
Making, as would they cast them down, from thence.
But ever as they fall, from steepling cliffs ;
To lapwinged plovers changed, they, wailing, rise ;
Which tossed and buffeted are, in madding blasts,
O'er sea and soil. Kindled the island-god,
Himself, a flaming beacon on his rocks,
Gives Cloten light to sea ! and Sena's spouse,
Clear goddess of the moon, hath Esla blessed.
Though toucht the prince, to Sena's sacred coast ;
He was, mongst fallen crags, the sea-god's guest.
The same hour, spake the oracle, in isle Sena,
Weird nun interpreting ; his priestess-choir
Be, henceforth, nine, should ten be told no more !
A king of Gaul offended hath, that gave
A changeling, to the god, for his own child.
Now lies, at point of death, that royal maid,
Guilt of her sire ; but Esla did no wrong.
Like little cowering bird, in fowler's snare,

In every dainty limb, yet trembles Esla,
Mongst tumbling billows. Come forth, from the rocks;
Cloten rows strongly, on the silver flood.
This jeopardy past, smooth lies large watery path,
Under sheen moon; which comforts their cold voyage.
Their nimble withers undersetting, draw
Manloving dolphins, forth, their bark, in teams.
Whilst then, on the salt tide, twixt sleep, they swim,
And wake; a bridal lay, sing aery spirits,
Till morrow's break: then night-born dawning ray,
(Like to a bride, white-clad, glad eyed and mild,)
Mounts on sea-throne; and cometh forth soon the sun,
With rainbow, crowned; wherein, as would they grace,
From heaven, this marriage, set have holy gods,
The hew of every flower of the spring mead:
And rose the morning's wind, with a sweet breath,
On them that wake, of daisy-hills from land.
O, joy! before the opening eyes, appears,
Of Cloten, his own navy; (it late, dispersed;
Had gathered, under Gaul, a strong sea-god,)
Making their merry flight, with wingéd breasts!
Seven rushing prows, divide much sprinkling flood.
Is their approach like Cantion chariots.
Bowed down, they stride before a clear East wind.
In their foretops, flies dragon of his sire.

How vails her sails, the foremost keel, and luffs,
Now, among the billows wild, up, in the wind.
And surely, of those, is marked their little coque.
Her shipmen let down barge; which to them rows!
And is it Cloten, those behold alive?
Sailing with one, that goddess seems; and drawn,
Upon great water's face, of finny teams;
Whose ship, men weened, was lost, not come to land!
Then immense joy; then shouting very great!
Almost was, in strong tumult, over-set
Their bark, wherein they now ben taken up!
Prince Cloten is indeed, none other is;
Live Cantion's prince! And, to the royal ship,
Those hastily row. Now mount they, on her board!
When was this seen, in their next consort ships,
Come sailing with square yards and wind apoop;
Which loosed, last flood, from Gaul, with blackened sails,
For the lost prince; that Cloten founden is!
The air, with trumps, they rend, and mighty shout.
Lie-to Kent's fleet: and who had, in cold billows,
Leapt down, in this first joy, to swim to Cloten,
Were taken then up, in their ships' skiffs, uneath.
Loost now broad sails, again, to merry wind;
Kent's keels, like coursers, spurn the clodded waves.

So run they all day on, towards Cantion cliffs.
Cloten, Kent's royal prince, which lately thrall,
Was bounden, naked, lost ; now, in tall poop,
Sits, noblest, mongst them all, with godlike looks ;
Girt in white-shining lawn, garded with gold.
By Cloten, sits ; wots no man what she is,
Some maid. Who look, fain, on her heavenly feature ;
Deem they behold one of those blesséd ones !
For long gilt wounden locks, like sunny rays ;
And purple-fringéd shining priestess-weed,
(White lawn, with ceint of gold,) Esla the bright,
Thing seemeth more fair than daughter of the earth,
Like goddess, clothed with grace. Who gaze, on her,
Think, that consent of music they do hear ;
When sounds an harp, from heaven, of the sun-god !
Though she herself, be daughter to a king ;
Her love, yet, took none thought of his estate.
Amazed she is, so many living wights,
To see ; well pleased, see Cloten, who hers is,
Be in this chief regard ! For many lords,
In boats, with long row-banks, arrived aboard ;
Sit bowed before him, reverent, with bared heads.
Blows aye the wind, in their full sails, forthright ;
Under their feet, rush on the winged sea-steeds.
They nigh to haven and wide sea-strand, at length,

Of Dubris ; neath white-shining Cantion cliffs.
Much people hie down, soon, to salt wave-brinks ;
On Kent's returning fleet to gaze ! Ere days,
Word come was to their ears ; how Cloten's vessel,
From hence outsailed, in that swart tempest, perished !
Run-in, with half-furled sails, they anchors shoot.
But when, who stand longs shore, see Cloten's barge,
(Wherein rowed forth, known by his shining weed,
The prince !) those cliffs wide-ring, with joyful shout.
Toucht to the chisel-banks, Cloten outleaps :
And bears his bride, to land, in his strong arms,
Esla, the bright ; and gives his gods high thanks !
Now Britons all, in their best garments, trim,
With guirlands on their heads, of the green oaks ;
With songs, bring Cloten forth to Dover gates :
Where, eftsoon, ready-made the royal chariots ;
Unto their journey, lo, the princes mount.
Cloten, lest any messenger him outride,
Doth put on, till set of that happy sun ;
And without pause, save often change of steeds.
The speedy wheels thus erst were to arrive,
In dim light of the moon, of happy Cloten,
Before Kent's royal dune, fair Durovernion.[1]

[1] Canterbury.

Loudly of the porter, Cloten gan enquire ;
What-ho! What means this wailing, that I hear,
From river meads? Answers the drowsy ward,
(Who drunken seems of ale, that he discerns
Nor horse nor chariot, at his city walls ;
Nor more knows Cloten's, his own king's son's, voice !)
This town is all went forth to funerals,
Which makes the king, for the drowned prince, to-night.
With Cloten, Esla alights ; she weary is,
To chariot-riding all unwont. He bids
Who followed fast with him, here, silent, wait ;
Whilst they twain, only, to the meadow, pass.
Eftsoon, they, from green hill, to Cloten known,
Look down ; (and issues, clear, the labouring moon,)
Over much people's confused multitude.
Hark, how the king loud calls, on his son Cloten!
Thrice calls the sorrowing sire, with choking voice.
Cloten, an empty pyre, sees, in that place!
Druids blow embers, on an altar's hearth.
Sees Cloten young men, his familiars, stand,
Of even years ; and each one armed, his hands,
With a sharp bronze, to smite himself to death.
(For such, mongst weeping kin, their custom is.)

Behold, some father kiss his loved son's knees;
Nor can his stubborn will he bend, from death!
One cries; he heard now noise of trampling steeds!
Shout other; they heard more than mortal voice,
Saying, Cloten lives! Then moved is all the press.
Leaps Cloten's heart, with bitter sweetness pierced.
Left Esla, a moment, sitting on dim grass;
Prince Cloten, cleaved thick back-turned multitude;
Comes, straightway, where the mourning old king is!
Murmurs the sire, who now, with dust, defiled
His royal hairs; how wot the only gods,
Where his son's life became, in vast salt deep!
Tables were cast to strand, of his ship's wreck,
The royal father sobs. Sudden, young Cloten,
Kisseth, closed in his arms, his wintered cheeks!
So turns, that light might shine on him, his face,
Light of bleak moon, that goeth down soon, to rest.
Quakes the hoar sire; and feels his knees to sink:
And feels his heart, was shut up in distress,
With fearful joy, oppressed. As saw he a spirit,
His voice sticks in his throat; and he lost breath.
Last his old tears, with hollow groans, break forth.
How stand astonished all! But him, prince Cloten

Had withdrawn privily. And, soon, ah, the glad
prince
Returns, now leading, happy, by the hand,
On, weary, gentle Esla, in clear moonlight!
Then kneeled down both, at king Cocidius' feet;
They kiss his hands, and feeble knees embrace:
And quoth the prince; This lady saved his life!
Who wept, for sorrow, erst, weep now, for gladness:
And went up a great joyous people's shout!
All follow then, the princes from the field;
With mirth, returning, thence, in mourning weed.
Men enter carolling, in the city's gates;
And throng, together, to their market place:
Where sacrifice shall be made, they hear, and feast.
Are soon great bonfires kindled, in their streets.
Heralds cry up and down; In the king's hall,
Is meat and mead, to-night, for all who will!

But come, with immense joy, the princes home,
To the king's house: the sire Cocidius,
(Who chief of the four kings of noble Kent,)
His son and Esla, leading, by the hands;
To that derne bower, forlorn of hope, of late,
Declines, where Kerriduen, mother queen.
She, when went forth the king, with funeral train,

Was fallen, in a stupor, on the floor.
Then seemed those like some revellers of the night,
Which, full of mead and impious, towards the gods,
With their untimely cries, and glare of lights,
Trouble this house of mourning; and whose noise
Wakens, for now she slept, the sorrowing queen.
How silent is this inner house, and dim!
Where dying embers glimmer, on the hearth,
The women's bower; that all this day resounded,
With woeful shrieks and baleful funeral wailing:
Where, with long loost locks, sate the sorrowing queen,
By empty bier, in mourning stole, among
Her women; which, displayed their fruitful paps,
Them cruelly did wrong! She bereaved queen,
Continually, did outrage her blubbered face;
And rent, with nails, her royal cheeks alas.
Her risen, behold, all trembling cold and wan,
At the king's voice. But, kindled, round the walls,
Soon, many torches; she Cocidius sees,
Turned, jocund: and smiles Cloten, like a dream!
Aye, and, with them, one that nymph or goddess seems.
And yet her long shut-up and straitened heart,
Unfolds, uneath; and still is like to break;

Impatient, whilst tells of this happy case,
In few rapt words, the sire Cocidius.
She, to her mother's breast, her son embraced ;
And, fixt, beholds ! to her, returned, alive !
Whom weened she, journeying now, in sunless paths,
In swart hell-wagon of the dread death-goddess.
Almost, stood still her heart, and swoons her sense.
But come queen Kerriduen to herself,
As one long lost, in sun-beat wilderness,
Slakes, at some well, his burning infinite thirst,
Long kisses drinks her mouth of her child's flesh.
And, dearly, hath Esla, sith, this queen embraced.
But, when they see her heaviness gin to pace ;
From women's bower, as meet to their estate,
The kings wend forth, to sit in audience.
Hastes Kerriduen, washt her tear-worn face,
To put-on queen's apparel : and her women,
She bids make ready, that they sup, anon.
Sith, when they sit, at board ; she, come her spirits,
Mother, o'er this new daughter, smiles and weeps.
Yet, hollow-eyed, she sighs, as wanting breath ;
Like one whom hellish fiends effrayed, of late ;
And scaped, (which certain seemed,) from some dread death !
Yet, whilst men tarry, in the king's hall, and sup ;

Dights Kerriduen, now, thrice-happy queen,
Unto her bridal bower, Esla, the bright.
Combing her locks of gold ; she, on her story,
Museth ; which, shortly, had rehearsed Cocidius :
And Cloten said, This lady saved his life!
She marvels, and oft Esla all-new embraced ;
And looketh, oft, in the maiden's heavenly face.
Great wonder is, in Esla's gentle breast,
Who priestess, from an isle, in Gaulish seas,
Is scaped, with Cloten, now, all evil hap!
The queen, (unclothed her bosom, ivory white,)
Some birth-mark sees, neath this dear child's left pap
Much like to berry of holy misselden !
With trembling fingers, Kerriduen, queen,
Uprents her tunic, of fine lawn. Ah, gods!
She another token finds, which, there, she sought ;
Twixt Esla's gracious shoulders and white neck,
Much like to bee ! For Gaulish Gwenneth, then,
She shrilly shright ; was whilom her own nurse.
That old wife cometh, soon, hipping, on her staff;
And Gwenneth wox dismayed, at this sweet sight!
So quoth, when she, again, had caught her breath ;
Queen, and dear daughter, nursling of this breast,
Doubt not, thy sister's very child is this.

How is her image glassed, in this sweet face!
How yearns, beholding her, mine aged womb!
The tokens, thou seest, ben those, which I marked well,
What night, from twixt my lady's knees, in Gaul;
(My foster-child,) these hands, thy sister's babe,
Received. With amorous groans, then Esla embraced,
That ancient nurse, dear, to her withered paps,
With greedy great affect; and still she kissed.
Dear queen, she cries, our very child is this!
Strain Esla, an hundred sithes, both, to their breasts,
Those weeping women. Gins then Esla weep,
For ruth: and as Spring-sun shines, after rain;
She smiles, for love, between. Like snowdrop, pale,
Heavy, with dew, at dawn, be her bright locks.
And, haply, these had wept forth, the long night,
Forgetful of the spouse; but that hoarse trump
Souneth the watch! from Durovern's ancient walls.
Behold! in royal ray, the mother queen,
Changed that late winter sadness of her face,
To summer's smiling pride, and springing gladness,
Forth issues, from her bower, leading bride Esla;

Where train of noble maidens of the town,
With joyous chant, receiving her, around
Her, cluster, bearing firebrands their white hands :
So pass before, to the bride-chamber door.
There stand, with mystic boughs, of misselden,
The white-stoled druids ; that sprinkle all the floor,
With holy water dew ; the whiles they bless,
With many a murmured spell, this marriage.
  Cocidius, king, there, his bride-daughter kissed.
The sire, that tiding, glad, tells forth, of her ;
That, this is the queen's sister's daughter dear,
Which Cloten saved, beyond the seas, from death !
  Lo, come is happy Cloten, mongst his peers ;
Which (his *soldurii*,[1]) would have died, to-night,
To be, in death, companions of his spirit.
With mirth and minstrelsy, those him, now, forsake,
At the bride-chamber door ; where, enranged, wait,
The maidens, which, around bright Esla, sing !
For gladness, shedding piteous tears between.

  Bladyn, then, chants ; how, sister to the queen,
The lady Havisa, wedded Ligorix,

[1] Oath-brethren ; thus in Cæs. a Gaulish word, (which is still of difficult interpretation.)

Lord of Armoric Curiosolitans.
Gainst Allorix fighting, then, Aulercan king,
Ligorix, in sally, from gates of his town,
Fell. At day's glooming, Havisa, the young queen,
Groped forth, to save his body. Stripped of harness,
She, ah! Ligorix, in the high-starred, ghastful, night;
Found, mongst slain corses, fallen all him around.
Was none there, with her, but a little maid.

Then, long, they, on her back, great poise, assayed,
To hoise; such power hath love! Aulercans' watch,
Heard stir, in field, which waited nigh the walls:
And flew a roving arrow, out of the night,
Of bow drawn at adventure; and Havisa it pierced!
She fell: were the swan-feathers wet, alas,
With her heart's blood; and fled that little maid.
Lay Havisa a corse, beside king Ligorix' corse:
Where Allorix found them, both, at morning light.

Next eve, when taken was Ligorix' burning dune,
Leapt, from amidst red flames, down, from high walls,
With Havisa's babe, her nurse! She, ah, bruised to death,
Lay still; and murmuring, soon, from her hurt flesh,
Her spirit flitted forth: from whose dead arms,
It rude Aulercan warrior taking up;
(That, from the woman's lips, heard, ere she passed,

Was this indeed the babe of Ligorix,
Wrapped in fine lawn, with precious needlework ;)
Looking for meed, should help his needy life,
Bare to the royal booth of Allorix.
Unto whom, that innocent offspring, cast her arms,
Of his slain foe ! and smiled the weeping child.
Then he, moved in his spirit, received the babe ;
And, childless man, it cherished for his own,
And Esla named. Was Ligorix, in his youth,
His peer, sometime, among those princes' sons,
Clothed in white lawn, and dight with torques of gold,
Which learned the chanted discipline of pale druids,
At Genabon,[1] in great dim Carnutian wood ;
Which sacred is. A man may enter, there ;
And eat of all wild fruits, before the gods ;
But blood he shall not shed, of beast or bird.
Sith, wedded a new wife, king Allorix ;
Unto him is born a daughter, the third year.
Thereafter being a nun deceased, in Sena ;
When sacred lots were cast, of Gaul's chief druids,
Was taken that only child of Allorix :
Who, moved, by a father's pity, in her stead,
Supposed sweet Esla ; and shorn were her bright locks.
But to deliver her, with joy and honour ;

[1] Now Orleans.

Conspired, had even the high immortal gods!
Now, on her father's knees, hath Allorix' child,
Slain the moon-goddess, with far-flying arrow!

There Bladyn ceased, to chant, in the king's hall.
The people praise him, with tumultuous voice;
Whose lay hath pierced, with pity, their rude hearts.
Men say, have breathed the gods, in Bladyn's breast,
A chant, that sweeter is than the brown mead.
The king, anon, him sends his own full cup;
Bidding him drink, and keep the silver bowl,
In guerdon of his song. And he charged Kamlan,
Give the bard a beast's burden of bread-corn;
And yearling of his rams, and certain mead;
That might make Bladyn merry, with his friends.
And joys the noble vates, to whom given,
Like to sweet birds, that chant in the sheen leaves,
With blissful voice, no substance of the gods.
Then, uprose king Duneda; uprose they all,
After the king; and draw them to their rests.

Duneda dreams, this night, he drave in chariot,
Whereas none stable soil; and none there was
Abode of any wight, nor grass nor woods:
But seemed his winged cart, on thick skies, to move;

And under him, was immense sound of waves !
Duneda called, then, on his saviour god ;
But turned the day to murk, and sun was not.
He called on moon and stars ; but they are hid :
Beheld then one ; that fares, with him, in chariot ;
Whose countenance like some of the blesséd gods ;
And like that stranger Joseph. Lightning the heavens,
He cannot rule his team ; that swerve aside.
Then king Duneda, cedes the reins, to him ;
Who guides, by higher path, the royal steeds,
Full of disbodied spirits ; which fly, from the earth,
Seeking themselves some starry new abodes :
Mongst whom, on mountain spire, sith, they hold fast.
Thence, like to rushing wind, dismount his steeds.
But Joseph putting, on his hands, his hands ;
He skilled, by slow degrees, to rule them right.
Sith he beheld, dim Mona, end of land,
Beneath him ; from whose cliffs, his team did leap,
Into a further isle. Duneda awakes ;
And, lo, the sun upmounts : and knew the king,
This dream of sleep, him sent his father's gods.
So rose ; and saie hastes, of fine lawn, do on,
Over his tunic, hemmed with needlework,
Of line ; and girt to him, with royal belt.
Sith soles, the hammered hide, of a wild ox,

Bound on his feet ; with buskins of the spoil
Of mountain broc. Then, took he, from the wall,
A polisht spear ; so went the hero forth,
To sit in Isca's morning audience ;
Before the Britons, in their market place.

This morrow, fair, by their account, is feast,
Of the full moon ; which first they see, in Britain :
Wherefore, with holiday in their hearts, Christ's brethren
Now issue to the springing river's mead ;
Praising Him, Who, out of vast deep, them saved.
They pass, before the haven of Isca's ships !
Where gather sea-folk to them, on the quay.
Mongst whom, by Pistos' mouth, gan Ithobal say :
Shipfare 's an image of our life ; O men
And brethren, that wont trade forth, on the Main ;
Seldwhile in lissom weather, smooth and still.
Ware, steady at the helms ! aye ready to shift sail.
And where we furl, in haven, or lie in road ;
Eftsoon, we must prepare us to depart.
But, shipferes, we have found, in our late voyage,

The true lodestar; whence, lightly, we account,
Of our ship's wreck, and all our charges' loss!
Come to the silver-streaming river's brinks,
Under bee-murmuring boughs of linden sweet;
In raiment clean, upon the daisy grass,
They sit; and cheerful hours spend, till high noon
Nigh draws. The saints, then, rise up, to turn home.
Yonder, mounts, from the ferry, some poor man;
Lo, is Tegid, teamster, to the brethren known;
Which lately drave their wain; from Amathon's dune.
And, as this wends, he weeps: was laid arrest
Now, in the water's ford, on those few beasts,
Whereof is all his children's livelihood.
Tell forth, who follow with the swonken wretch;
This morn, they his poor goods, saw strained, for debt;
His babes haled to the merchants, to be sold.
Lifted, this weary wight, his eyes; and seeing,
Where pass before him, by the river's brink,
Those strangers, to them runs; and panting asks,
Of help, (and they might aught,) in his distress;
With whom was power found of some healing god.
Is Tegid's caban this, without the walls;
Whereto they now arrive. Is there none voice,

Of wife or child, to welcome his come-home.
It empty is, from roof-tree, to the floor.
And Tegid, who, a little corn, not hath ;
(Whereof, before men strangers and hearth-guests,
He might aught set, which his poor threshold pass,
As custom is,) amongst them stands confused !

When Joseph, voice of Britons, understood ;
Moved with compassion, servant strong, in faith,
Of Christ ; and lifting holy hands, towards Throne
Of heaven, he bade sweep forth the waggoner's cote.
Then charged he Tegid, pour, (his beasts' meat,) out ;
What little rests of grain, in his poor wallet.

Falls forth the corn ; nor ceaseth it yet to run,
From Tegid's hand ! till that poor bower and hall,
Is full, like garner, to the very door.
Before the threshold, neighbour women sweep :
Then, joyous, spread their mantles on the street ;
Whereon, eftsoon, outrun are new great heaps !

Then Joseph spake ; Enough ! go sell this good,
Which gives thee God. Parts running that poor man ;
And with glad heart, the brethren saints wend home.
He, with blithe cheer, hies to their market street,
Under the hill ; whom seemeth all, yet, a dream ;
His wife and children small, to ransom home.

Try, who corn-masters, samples in their palms ;
And it, in measure, hew and poise, appraise
Best grain of all ; whereof each one some buys ;
Numbering to Tegid silver rings and bronze,
Or tin. And whilst those merchants question still,
He gladly, and like to one beside his mind,
His wife and children small, for price, redeemed.
And very beautiful is his poor spouse ;
Was evil his intent, which on them seized.
But noised this wonder, in the street, anon ;
Came voice, from mouth to mouth, up from the town,
To the king's ears. Bethought him of his dream,
Duneda ; and sent one of his guard, to call
Before him, Tegid in : who, come, eftsoon,
The sire requires, and, with that poor wight, questions;
What is that new thing, which of him, he hears ?
The men, lord, that us seemed some ship-wrecked strangers,
Quoth Tegid, are come, surely, from the gods !
He, also, yester, saw, was their wain-path,
Whereby, from Amathon's dune, the strangers passed,
(Even as wont footsteps of the holy gods !)
In wide green field, grown fairer than the rest,

With new-sprung grass! Like gods, those came, unwist
From whence, Duneda, and they healed Kowain's wound.
The lord liked of the waggoner's bold speech.
He sends, call Amathon's son. His messenger, Kowain
Finds not: nor yet returned that prince; who ridden
Was, home, to gather wains and armament.
He sends, again, then, for those shipwrecked strangers.
All yield them room, when they come in, with Kamlan.
They see then sitting certain, in mead-hall,
Before Duneda, in rotchets of white lawn;
Men of dark looks, and much like Corbelo's druids;
Whose foreheads bound with the sheen leaves of holm.
The gravity sits, lo, on an equal throne,
Beside Duneda, of the high-druid Aesgar;
In the mid-bay; where burn, with rushen wicks,
And fat, two lamps, hight Con and Cran; whose bowls
Inlaid, (renowned smith's work,) of fretted bronze,
With gold. Them Camlogenos, king in Gaul,
Sent hither, with his son; ere Roman wars.
Hearers of Aesgar sit, round these high walls,

Mongst white-stoled druids; lords' sons, some of
West march,
And Deheubarth; but are the most ones strangers,
Young noblemen of Llydaw;[1] (which, Part-of-*Gallia*,
Comata, is now named, of all-conquering Rome!)
Their wont is tarry, in Isca, one year's space;
To learn the chanted arcane discipline,
Of Aesgar's druids; and are they, there, king's guests.
Wreaths shine of gold, on all their haughty necks.
Beyond them, sit, who chief ones of the town.
And now is eve; when kindled be long hearths,
In the hall's midst; and hanged round on these
walls,
Be brands of cloven pine. The people husht;
From his high stall, erst Aesgar, slowly, speaks:
Touching a wonder hath, to-day, been seen;
Are we now come together. Shipwrecked
strangers!
I you appose; by what power or strong spell,
Ye do these things? King of Duffreynt and
druids!
Deathworthy adjudged are, by Dunwallon's
laws,

[1] Llyd-aw, (that which lies along the water;) now Bretagne, and part of Normandy.

Who bring in other gods. I ask of these
Strangers, what deem they, of Isle Britain's gods?
Before them all, stood up then Aristobulus,
Kinsman of Jesus; and by Pistos' mouth,
Spake; Princes, elders, people of this town,
Know that our God, He who upholds the world,
Whose Throne, yond starred high crystal firmament;
Who gives, to all men, kindly life and breath,
Hath wrought this sign, which ye, to-day, have seen.
Who being Himself invisible, yet All-seeing,
Is Everliving, Infinite, as the Sea;
Which closing-in the world, is closed of naught.
Before all-thing, (which He hath made,) He was;
The infinite, only, God. He Father is,
(He One,) of all: and is His Heavenly Voice,
That Whisper which is heard in every place,
And in all hearts! So, with an angel's face,
The saint sate down. Sith king Duneda spake;

Was Dawn divine named, Firstborn of the gods.
Thing incorruptible, also, undying is;
Whence, being, of one celestial fire, our spirits;
(I speak to druids,) they shall not, utterly, perish!
With the vile sloughy garment of this flesh.
But answered the dark gravity of Aesgar;
Who sits, at his right hand, with lowering looks:
Methought, Duneda, arrived, in evil hour,
These uncouth strangers, men that ship-wrecked were.
Behold their swarty favour; such as wont
Be pirates' looks, and men of wicked life!
Expulsed, abhorred of all men, these have sailed;
And broken have gods, of this sea-deep, their ship,
(Gods, whom most worship the Dumnonians!)
Were such not, peradventure, homicides;
Whom angry heavens have ever since pursued?
Ben not there jugelours, men, whose whispered spells,

Have power even to compel the wavering winds;
Aye and even the stars of heaven wrest, from their courses?
Have not such made snow fall, in Summer season;
Other appearance shown, in the air, of ships;
Some, Summer fruits, in days of Winter-feast?
And yet I say; if those blasphemed our gods,
Should such not die? Wherefore my sentence is,
Be banned these men from borders of Duffreynt.
But answered Cadvan, grave and ancient lord;
Next him, who sits, with reverend beard and looks;
(Nigh kinsman, to Duneda, and Amathon's friend:)
Why proffer railing words, gainst the king's guests?
But, aye, thy wont was, Aesgar, to despise
The poor. And if heaven's lightning burned their vessel,
They hallowed are, according to our laws.
Ween'st thou, there ben none other gods, than ours?

But what and if, (which, these men's deeds, declare,)
A breath be in them, of the holy gods,
Which Eryr saw, in his prophetic vision.
At this word, rose displeasantly the high druid !
As smoke unto the eyes; and smell of corse,
Is in men's nostrils, such, is name of Eryr,
In Aesgar's ears; who, midst king's hall, goes forth.
Follow sourfaced disciples of these druids.
The people open lane for their proud steps;
And those, no man saluting, stately pass.
The king commands, Mix, and bear round sweet mead,
And barley-ale! And, whilst the Britons drink;
Was stir, at door, now in the lower hall:
Where two men, running-eremites, be come in;
Whose knees, kiss, reverent, and their lean hands Britons:
Men lean of flesh and blackened, in the sun,
And without garments, save some woollen cloth,
Wound round their loins; unkempt their long hair locks,
Their beards, like Autumn leaves. Upon a lace,
Depend, of silver, on their panting chests,
Bright crystal stones, from Avon's river strand: ·

Whereon, they looking, image of clear souls,
Recomfort still their hearts. And, on the stars,
They gaze, by night, and seldwhiles on dark earth.
Impelled their feet, as by some god, to-night;
The river, to Caer Isca gates, these passed.
Eremites, unwont, in any town, to tread:
They will not sit, nor eat bread, nor taste mead;
Though brought in crystal cup, to them, is mead.
But, gazing on the saints, anon, they ask;
What message bring these men, of heavens' light?
Then Pistos answered; they had heard God's Voice,
Saying, Love your enemies, Blessed be the pure
And lowly, in heart: be children of that Light.
An eremite spake, and bowed him to the hearth;
O thou that sittest on throne, lord of Duffreynt,
Son of high sires, descended from the gods!
Holy are their words; and like the words of Eryr,
The eagle-borne; who naked, without bower,
Lodged in sharp cliffs; where, brought him, each day, meat,

The fowls of heaven, wild berries, in their beaks;
And were all forest-beasts, to Eryr, meek.
Much Eryr spake of washings, which should purge
Our soul, from death: and, daily, in water-brooks,
He dipped his flesh; and prayed, bear down his guilt,
From God's remembrance. Dwells, he said, our spirit,
In darkness and disease, the body's guest.
But purged from the vile raiment of this corse,
It shall, to stars, of new, ascend from death.
Till then, our body should be like to lamp,
Wherein do shine our souls! His fellow, quoth;
How shall a man, born of man's unclean seed,
Attain, dread gods! to pure immortal stars?
Whose wretched days are strife, for weed and bread:
Whose perplext path is darkness; and whose end,

His fleshes death, and griesly rottenness!
He ceased; and those both turned them, to go forth.
Arose then, in moot-hall, new grave discourse,
Of war toward; and Duffreynt's power and chariots:
And what allies should, with Duneda, march;
And how would Hafren, soon, Silures pass.
Yet other make debate, of signs and omens;
Wherein men, of the blindness of their hearts,
Ween; should foreshow them, things to come, those gods;
Which their own thoughts imagined, and hands wrought!
Whilst long they sit by louver, of the thatch;
Where stars, in night's swart deep, erst, shining forth;
Pale light falls, on grey embers of their hearth.
Lo, dawning ray! and mingled sweet consent,
Already, of early birds, is heard, without.
The morrow brings new thoughts: uprose Duneda;
The king goes forth. Uprose, then, all the rest:
The brethren also; on whom Britons gaze,
Some kind, some with fell looks of adversaries!
Duneda beckons, friendly, with his hand.

When now this morrow's light is, well-nigh, wasted;
Chief lords and captains of Dumnonians;

With pomp and retinue of shrill painted chariots,
Come by the river's ford, again, to Isca : .
Chanting old warlike deeds, as they fast ride.
Those enter, soon, in mead-hall to Duneda :
Kamlan them fills great horn of the wild bull,
Whose lip of beaten gold, with the best mead.
Those all then standing round the king Duneda ;
Each, dipped therein his finger, he makes oath,
In words of the king's druid ; to witness called,
(Whilst drink they all thereout,) the holy gods !
  Early at morrow's day, depart those lords.
How shine their running wheels, against the sun,
That mounts ! The third eve, with their bands of warriors,
They all shall gather armed, to king Duneda.
  Nigh to the town ; (above that river-field,
Where daily march, to warlike exercises,
Forth Isca's youth, the effort of their strength,
To prove ; and learn skill of manslaying arms ;)
Is grove, whereas no common foot may tread ;
But druids, with Aesgar, have, therein abode.
Some all unwitting of the Syrian brethren,
Seeking, where might they pray, sequestered place ;
Now enter, singing hymns, with a glad voice.
  Saw them one Llys, a brain-sick sorcerer,

Of demon-gods ; which, after them, aye crieth.
So that their hearts were straitened, in their breasts :
And gaze men after Llys, in Isca street ;
Marvelling, so lewd a servant have the gods !
And yield him room, whereso this, muttering, goeth ;
Most like an hound, without companion.
Foul is the wretch, and gore-stained, aye, his face :
For, where this cometh by shambles, he, with both
His hands, like to kite's claws, stuffs his fell chaps.
Durst none deny him, were he lief or loath.
And, as he goeth, Llys howls, to his dire gods.
Upon the awry shoulders of this wight,
A wolf's spoil hangs ; and else he wears no cloth.
Through the wolf's gape, he looks, with grinning teeth.
Now hath this Llys, great adder found and tamed ;
Which, on his arm, his scaly boughts upwreathes :
And threatens, still, the worm, with horrid crest,
Who nighs the loathly wight ; that, with foul hands,
Smites whom he will, and buffets with his feet.
Thus him, dread mockery, his demon-gods have dight ;
And egg, with dire outcries, to vex Christ's saints.
He foams, when they are seen ; and his lewd tongue
Defiles the innocent air, with blasphemies.
The saints had little gone forth, in that grove ;
When certain meet with them, men of the druids.

Then these invite them, with deceitful looks,
With them, to wend ; making as, further, aught,
They would enquire, touching the strangers' gods.
So, led of those, they come to Aesgar's hall ;
Whereas, but from the threshold, shines dim light.
Of good and human kindness, void ; that place
Is full of demons, which their hearts oppress !
Young men sit, on the floor, with dangerous looks ;
Chanting dark lays, lip-discipline of vain druids.

The saints salute them : none, again, them greet.
Who bring them in, (was froward their intent,)
Them lead, in murk, to sit, in place unmeet ;
Where ashes of their hearth. So cometh-in Aesgar,
Hound-faced ; who makes as though the saints he saw not.
Then he, on splayed ox-hide, under the wall,
From them, apart, sate down ; with heinous cheer,
Of priest, in whose heart dwells no power of love ;
But seems he prophet of some evil god !

He of those shipwrecked strangers, after pause ;
Speaking, through an interpreter, requires
Name of their god ; and touching the soul, both
What thing they deem ; and of this body's death.

Then fell the Spirit, on Shalum ; who, for burns
His heart, rose-up ; and spake, by Pistos' mouth ;

Allfather, to low circle of the earth,
His Son sent down, to save our souls from death:
Nor can they ever die, which, in Him, trust;
For, in them, liveth the everlasting Christ;
Though die and, even now, doth fade our flesh.
And Aesgar hear! Shall broken be, God saith,
Your idols vain, cast out in places waste;
Defouled, and trodden, under, of wild beasts!
But forasmuch as, in thy froward malice,
Thou askedst, the Lord's Name, of all the earth;
It may not uttered be of mortal breath!
Shine, in that gloom, the angry eyes, as snakes,
Of druids, men which would slay those saints of Christ!
Heard, then, hoarse clamour of mad Llys, without;
But even who druids abhor his loathly looks.
They thrust aback, they put him from their place!
When, after this, the brethren would depart;
By way, those lead them, from the druids' hall,
Where opens, namely, a little wicket gate;
So low, that uneath, creeping, might they pass.
Beyond, lo, a paved court, full of bees' hives;
Where, chest on chest, is all the air ahum,
Of the sweet honey-flies. Thence, to great gate,

An alley leads ; wherethrough, they, needs, must pass,
By certain cabans ; whence comes confused voice,
Unto their ears, as yowling of wild beasts.
Then, were they ware, of some climbed by the thatch ;
Men of the druids, and of beasts' sties, beneath.
Straight, those draw hatches up ! Wolves, hideous,
Outleap ; ramp horrid bears, with open throat !
Yerning, with dreadful teeth, upon Christ's saints ;
That lift to God, All-seeing, their troubled hearts !

Their eyes being opened, they, again, the Angel
Behold, which saved them, fleeting in vast deep ;
Standing to save. Saw him the beasts : they crouch
And whine, for dread ; they creep back to their dens !
Albion uplifts the gate, of immense bars,
From off his hinge ; and beckoning to them, bade
His heavenly voice, (like multitude, that sounded,
Of waves !) they haste to Isca, on swift feet.

Touching those forest beasts, were wont tell druids,
Did Sarron take him whelps, of several kinds ;
That might, by such, be known what man's kin was ;
Ere tamed, by laws and worship of the gods !

So come those brethren, to the rest, in Isca :
And all-thing they, from point to point, rehearse.
Then Joseph deems, were meet they sought speech,
erst,

Of king Duneda. Brings them Kamlan in,
Before the king ; to whom they them submit.
Duneda sitteth long in doubt ; nor spake
Yet word. Then cometh in one of his armed men ;
Who tells, how Aesgar loosed the druids' BAN,
Forbidding, to these shipwrecked, fire and meat,
Of any, to be given. And, should be none
So hardy; and that, on pain of the great curse,
Aid or abet them. The king sends for Kowain !
Who come ; he gives him charge, with thirty spears,
To place of safety, to convey these strangers ;
Knowing, that Aesgar now intends their deaths.
But sith, the after-morrow, he from Isca,
Himself should fare, unto Silures war ;
To holms of AVALON, hath devised Duneda,
(Garden of apples named, in chants of druids,)
Those shipwrecked send. Isle Avalon, which named ALBAN,
A Sanctuary is, mongst all tribes of South Britons ;
Where none may enter in, with weaponed hand.

BOOK X

ARGUMENT

KOWAIN conveys the brethren, with guard of spears, by night-time, for safety, to deep woods. The third even, he brings them on, to king Duneda, in the field. Lay of Melyn, the king's bard. Duneda, parting, dismisseth the shipwrecked strangers, with kindness, to their journey.

A grange of the king's husbandmen. The body of Llys is found rent, by wolves. The brethren come to AVALON. The outlaws' hall. Keth one of the Silures' captives. Keth's tale. Hyn the outlaws' magistrate; who gathers young men to build, the strangers, hall and bowers. A water-hamlet, in the lake. Blind Sigon and his son, Cuan, singer to the harp of Erinn.

Word is brought, to Avalon, of the king's warfare. Shalum ears and sows. Story of the lady Keina. Ithobal builds an hall of prayer. Malchus languishes, in Avalon. Story of his life: his death and burial.

Carvilios, noble bard of Gaul, sings in Caer Verulam. After Togodumnos, Caratacus, his other son, is sent by Cunobelin, Lord of Britain, ambassador unto Cæsar. Bericos and Adminius, princely exiles from Isle Britain, dwell in Rome; where, Caligula slain, is emperor, now, his uncle Claudius.

Adminius, in Rome, lies sick of a fever. The dying prince asks forgiveness of his father's house. Embla, (daughter of Briton Dumnoveros, and friend of Octavia, Cæsar's daughter,) is borne homeward, in the twilight, from Claudius' palace. Her litter's train, being riotously molested, by revellers, in the Roman street: she, noble Briton maiden, is saved, by the strong hand of prince Caratacus.

Dumnoveros and Caratacus are made friends. Embla, unveiled in her father's house, cures the prince's wound. Death of Adminius, and his public funerals.

BOOK X

LATE, the same night; when sleeping, now, the dune,
Kowain, according to Duneda's word,
The saints leads forth; and that with guard of spears;
Convey them, erst, to certain forest place:
The second morrow, bring them to him on;
Where he, in field, at sanctuary holm,
Doth purpose sup. Kowain, passed Isca gates,
Them upland leads; till goes the moon to rest.
Weary the holy women, then, to wend;
In holt they lodge; where sweet green hazel boughs,
Be them, for bowers. They, without fear, there pass
That day and morrow next, till afternoon.
Through wood-glades, then, prince Kowain brings them on,
To croft; where well and cragged holy holm;
In whose old arms, hang, (superstitious gifts,
Of Britons,) horns of beasts and fluttering clouts.
Beneath that large pavilion of sheen leaves,

On mossy mould, lo, hassog[1] mats displayed.
And here should come the king, to sup, from Isca.
Where now they halt; there lies, already slain,
A four-years' steer; and pleasant smell goes up,
Of roast; for cooks broil, yonder, at long hearths,
The fat. The saints here safe, till set of sun,
Await. Day glooming, shouted is, the chariots
Of king Duneda; and lords, with him, approach!
The sire now lights, in a war-glittering harness,
And kindly greets, (that him salute!) the strangers;
And calls, next him, to sit, in honoured place,
Among his captains. Sit, beyond, ringed round,
Duneda's champions, hundred men-at-arms.
Bear sewers in, then, loaves, in bascads white,
And flesh, on burdock leaves. And the king eats,
And lords and saints. And when, sith, on their hands,
Have water poured, the king's young men-at-arms;
They *curmi*[2] and *metheglyn*,[3] unto all, bear around.
In this, in the twilight, are nighing seen,
With speckled hoods and cloaks of gaudy green;
Men, bearing shields and spears: some Duffreynt bards,

[1] Welsh *hesg*: a kind of sedge.
[2] Welsh *cwrw*, Old Irish *cuirm*: a kind of beer.
[3] Welsh *medd*, mead; and *llyn*, liquor.

Are those, that purpose to Duneda's wars.
Who leads them, is bold Melyn, royal bard;
That can both chant and fight. Of kings and warriors,
Each eve, should these sing the proud battle-deeds;
In mortal tempest of swift shields and spears.
The king, to call those bards, to sup, sends Kamlan.
Sith, when have those well-drunken the lord's mead;
Duneda spake to Melyn, one whose arm,
Bears brazen targe, his right hand two sharp javelins;
And are his hardy looks, to warfare, stained,
With woad: yet, backward, hanging, at his nape,
From silver lace, a gentle crowth, behold.
Well couth he it touch, with heavenly piercing note,
Before Dumnonians, entering into fight.
Yet hath a warrior's praise, this, to hurl darts;
And lightfoot, to outrun the enemies' chariots.
But passing all, is, (the gods' gift, to few,
Whom they much love,) his skill of making well.
Duneda spake, that Melyn sing some lay,
Which breathed, in him, the gods. He would it were,
Of Avalon's isles; and namely of sacred Alban.

When Melyn took his rote, from off his neck,
Trembled the strings, stirred of a warbeling wind.
Then swelled the vates' breast, wherein there falls
Prophetic murmur, spirit of sweet song.
Of all the bards, whom nourisheth king Duneda,
First named, and for he elder is, is Bladyn ;
But none, of Britain's bards, is more than Melyn.
Now husht sit Britons, when the valiant hands,
Of Melyn, who stands leaning on his targe,
Strook the bright chords, which gave a silver sound,
That thrilled the hearers' ears ; and dream their hearts.
Gins Melyn, emuling late chant of Bladyn,
Record, how, in old days, days of the gods,
That wonne, now, in high glassy firmament,
What time, gods dwelled yet, in the world, as kings ;
Their divine children came to Avalon god's
Fair garden of apples : unto banquet called,
Of Lîr, who lord is named of the five seas ;
Expecting the return of his twelve sons,
That, wooers, in twelve ships, were sailed from Alban.[1]
And set forth was that navy ; to bring home,

[1] The parts of Avalon.

The twelve affianced daughters of bright isles,
Of Brigida, daughter of the golden sun.
Then was dark spirits of the aery deep,
(Grudging, because they were not called to feast,)
Transfigured them, to rushing tempests, rive
Their broidered sails; and having numbed, by spells,
The mariners' hearts, amongst vast tumbling billows;
So that the oars fall from their idle hands!
To an isle of strong enchantments, they them cast
That deemed the sons of Lîr, was this the isle,
Of Brigida; and they leapt, in haste, to shore,
Out of their keels. But swallows up that deep,
The sand, beneath their feet; and from their ships,
Parts, which behind them burn, that sailed from Alban.
Red flames, before them, seen; of the sun's isle,
His crown of rays, they deem: and, with stout heart
Assay, those brethren, break through to their loves.
But kindles all that soil, with glowing heat;
So that they do consume away, as mounts
The sun, with anguish of their mortal part!
The same hour, in their isle, from thence far off;
Those divine daughters, from their bower of grass,
At dawning ray, already dight, dance forth,
To welcome in their spouses and their loves;
And still, unto their island strand, they watch.

But the envious spirits, which have no power, at all,
In the sun's isle, made seem, by magic spell,
The appearance, in the sea, of ships that sail:
And falsely, of cloud, made seem a clodded strand.
And limned therein, as princes which ascend.
Them veiled the divine maidens, that with joy,
Then, singing, hand in hand, in gracious wise,
Begin, with tinkling feet, dance to their loves.
Till, from cloud-cliffs, them seeming a fast ground,
They, with dread shrieks, fall headlong, to deep shore!
Dagda, (who father of all gods is named,)
That sees the world, in rundle of his targe,
Like a steel glass, these extreme haps beheld;
And sate, somewhile, in doubt. Then Dagda changed,
His son Lîr's sons, to swans of mighty wing!
The daughters of his daughter, Brigida,
To wailful curlews: (whence, are lapwinged fowl,
And swans, held sacred, mongst all tribes of Britons.)
Then Dagda sent forth, bondman of the gods,
Creef, seed of giants old. Creef was not slain,
In their destruction, being yet a child;
But pity found, at hearthstone of the gods.
Those spirits sleeping, after wicked deed,
Creef, (Hundred-handed, for his immense force,
Named,) took in a sea-cave. Creef, o'er them, cast

Inextricable net of subtle brass!
Which Goibniu forged, artificer of the gods.
Creef, in a sack, them bare forth, on his neck,
To those false isles, and that deceitful cliff;
And hanged, in midst of windy flames, whereas,
Aye-wrathful god of tempest daily breathes,
On hooks; that divine smith, with angry heart,
Wrought; and sith clenched, with sledge of adamant.
  But riding, the next year, with his swan-sons,
In his cloud-chariot, Lîr, mongst watery gods;
To visit Lug, (thus hight is the sun-god,)
With divine cry, that isle spurned with his foot;
And billows overran the magic rock:
And whelmed, wrath of grieved gods, immense salt deep.
His garden of apples, sith, the god defaced.
Riding before salt billows, Lîr them leads,
O'er Alban's plain; and made it mere and fen.
  On Alban knolls, sith, dwelled huge Yotun brood,
Till they, contemners of sky-dwelling gods;
Fighting gainst neighbour giants, of Mendip hills,
Ebar and Chedar and Eriol, soaked with blood,
The soil: and yet gore-stained, that fenny ooze
Is seen; whence Taran them, with venging lightning,
Off-slew. Their corses sunk to the mere's ground,

Half-quick; and sometimes, like wide-flickering flame,
Their ghosts ben seen, yet, flit, o'er the foul fen.
There ended he: all clashing warlike arms,
Applaud and say; it was a golden story.
Reached forth his own war-spear, the king's high hand,
That seemed, with silver rings, some serpent sheen;
Whose gilded tongue, athirst for enemies' gore,
This purple-glooming air doth gride. And sent
It, to the warlike bard, the king, by Kowain;
In sign of his and all these hearers' praise;
And gold, for his dispense, in the king's wars.
Joyed Melyn, in his valiant hands, receiving
The lord's war-gift and purse; and to swart Camulus,
His battle-god, the warrior-bard prays loud,
Might this dart drink, first, the king's enemies' blood!
A certain railing young lord, friend to Aesgar,
Hearing those went to Avalon, under ward,
Quoth, looking on them, still, in 'sdainful wise,
Well were those watery holms, to such, assigned;
Which come from far o'er-seas, gainsay our gods.
In Alban's infect air, might those soon perish!
Mongst barking frogs and outlaws fugitives.

Now rising the moon's lamp, part the king's men;
And with chief captains, king Duneda, in chariots,

Mounts. He commits, to Amathon's son, again,
Lead-on these strangers, to the holms of Alban ;
So beckons, kindly, to the saints, farewell!
With easy and slow pace, the brethren wend,
For follow, feeble-kneed, the holy women.
With the king's spears, prince Kowain softly rides,
Before them. Comes then to the Syrians' ears,
In the night air, grave din of gentile rites :
Druids keep, nightlong, bloody sacrifices!
They cover their pale faces, as they fare.
With bending knees, is sorrow in their souls ;
That any should be lost, for whom died Christ!
Day dawning, at poor stead, now, they arrive,
Of husbandmen, whose these round, wattled, bowers ;
Strange in the Syrians' eyes! a royal grange :
Where barn of beams and reeds and cattle-byres.
Are thrall-folk those, saith Kowain, of Duneda.
Fierce Briton hounds are meek, when they approach.
That barn they enter, by an upper floor ;
Whereto, upon a bank, ben wains updriven.
There come Duneda's thralls, to salute Kowain.
The Syrians sit down, weary, amongst heaped halm.
Poor bondwives bring, new-baken, to them soon,
Loaves, of their barley-grist ; smooth morrow's milk,
Butter, and honey-combs, of the king's hives ;

That seen are, many rows, in this poor place,
Which for purveyance of the royal mead.
Till afternoon, they rest : sith, that poor folk
Bring in their sick ones ; for those understood,
Now, of the men-at-arms, the strangers have
A power to save. On them all, Joseph lays,
His healing hands ! Plough-oxen stand without,
Yoked unto two light wains. Lo, this one, dight
Is, for the women : that shall bear their stuff ;
And corn, in sacks, behold Duneda's gift !
Which may suffice them, till some mean might find
The king, to send those shipwrecked to mainland.
And being now ready, part the men of prayer,
Thence, forth, with blessing of those Britons poor ;
To whose gross ears, not come was Aesgar's curse.
They journey, in a fair coast, as Libanus ;
By clear brooks, coombs, fresh cowslip lawns, blue woods ;
Where bowering, under brier, pale primrose blows.
Late now is eventide, in Utmost Britain.
How shrills the lark aloft, in lightsome heaven !
What hour were longwhile fallen, in winter season,
Night-murk, on these sheen fields : yet amorous chant,
Of merle, sounds, from yond twilight underwoods !
Fades, the day, dies : seems then to mourn the ground,

In dusky weed. Weary, wayfaring, thus,
Chanting their temple-songs, the Syrian brethren ;
To place inhabited, come, another grange ;
Stedding of poor herdfolk, Duneda's servants.
They in hall of wattled boughs and crooked studs,
Enter ; where bondwives roll the rumbling millstones.
These pause, then, rise up, to serve the king's guests :
Sith, set before them pulse and milk-meat. Sup
The saints, remembering Christ ; and so they rest :
But wolves howl, nightlong, dreary, round that place.
With the new sun, uprisen, they drink smooth bowls,
Of morrow's milk ; so, on their journey, pass.
They were not gone forth, on the dewy bent,
A mile, when word comes shouted back, to Kowain !
Man's poll, (by the hair, ah, horrid sight, he it holds!)
Hath one now founden of his men-at-arms :
Who it casts, then, loathing, to the young lord's feet !
And all men know, that gory grinning face,
That it was Llys ! Come running, from nigh knoll,
Men herding flocks, to see this sight, and tell
Thing they had seen : even now, rent his lewd corse,
In pieces, on the field, when they led forth ;
Nor gnawed had wolves, at all, his carrion flesh.
Yester, they saw this wight, alive, that passed.
He came and drank of their ewes' milk and quoth ;

He sought to kill some enemies of the gods.
The madman bare a great skean, in his belt!
Night fallen, some wretch ran, yelling, by their lodge;
Whom howling scour of wolves, coursed in full chace.
Then, outran all the hinds, with bats and hounds;
Yet might they not that wild hunt overtake,
Nor fray the bloody wolves, with yelling voice.
Llys, when he heard those shipwrecked went safe forth,
On whom was that crude ban of Aesgar loost;
Waxed mad, outfared with great snatcht shambles' knife.
From stead, he stalked, to stead, from grange, to cote;
Asking, eachwhere, had men seen, in their path,
Such outlaws? whom might any, finding, kill!
Marked well their wheels' tract, Llys, to slay them, cast,
At unawares; and the innocent oppress!
His mind was, steal upon them, this last night;
When slumbering the king's guard. But the EYE sleeps not
In heaven, which is above the starry night!
And yet they fare, three days, in upland Britain,
With Amathon's son, and the king's guard of spears;
Shunning, for that ban's curse, all village-steads.

Are cragged these green bents ; where their wains, oft,
Might hardly pass. Seem the wide-shining heavens,
Vast golden womb ; whose infinite breast low earth ;
Where Spring-time's medléd nation is brought forth.
How shining be these lawns, with blissful flowers,
Gladdening their hearts. They view, gainst afternoon,
Mendip ; whereunder misty wilderness.

Deep way and foul, before them, lies, henceforth ;
Where golden king-cups blow, and marish lilies.
How, to the Syrians' eyes, yond sallows, dim,
Seem olive yards ! Shows them, then, Amathon's son,
Broad-gleaming far-off mere, and holms of Avalon !
Towards eve, they come to bourn-stones in the fen ;
Whereat, with Kowain, all depose their arms.
They leave the wains there, also, under guard :
Strange smell their nostrils smites, of peaty reek !
When they ascend, unto the outlaws' hill.

Of halm-thatched wattle cabans, lo, poor street ;
Echoes to the saints' tread ! Few wildered wights,
With rusty glibs, men careless of their good ;
As who their hope have, in this deadly place,
Lost, look forth at low doors ; and fugitives,
Under blood-ban, are many from their tribes.

There some, in mire and slough, come, barefoot, forth ;

That view, with wondering looks, the strangers pass,
Whom sends Duneda, lord of their poor lives.
So all they wend, to the poor outlaws' hall,
Of clay-cast wattle work, and daubed with lime,
On ground-wall of green sods : where-midst, burns hearth,
Of fenny reeking turves ; which squalid wights,
With hollow looks, on peaten stools, sit round.
These all, uprisen, about him, greet prince Kowain,
And some, straw down fresh rushes, for the guests.
Behold, with Kowain, sit, mongst outlaws poor,
Those men of prayer. The Syrian brethren muse,
To see so many of them, with trembling joints !
Whom racks a daily fever of the fen.
With murmur, as of famisht hounds, those watch
The barley-cakes, which gin prince Kowain's men,
Out of their wallets, hungry, take and eat !
Sith, being those given some of their bread and flesh ;
Did gnaw even on the bones. Then sends back Kowain,
Unto the wains, bring in the strangers' stuff.
He in Duneda's name, the shipwrecked strangers,
To this poor folk commending, the king's word,
Leaves said, for HYN, (who, Avalon's magistrate,
To-day was ferried, in the rushy lake,

Unto another holm ;) to entertain
These, as becomes his guests ; and measure land,
For them, in the king's field ; and seemly bowers,
There, build them. Kowain risen, then, takes his leave.

To the caterfs, he must, before him marched,
Towards Severn, ride with speed. His part it is,
Standing in king Duneda's battle-chariot,
To bear his targe, before the royal breast.
To Alban brow, the saints now bring him forth :
Where, parting, Amathon's son, of wonder-working
Joseph's healing God, a blessing asks ;
Of Whom they much had communed, in their path.

Uncheerful fenny damps, sink on their sense ;
When they ascend, again, to Alban's hill ;
And wend back, lonely, to the outlaws' hall :
Yet not alone, for, in their midst, is Christ !
Where come again ; they, with the holy women,
The lady Keina, (veiled in long white stole,)
Find ; priestess she of Brigida, light-faced goddess ;
That daughter of all-seeing sun, is named.
And as wide-shines the sun, on all the earth ;
Strangers, at Brigida's ever-burning hearth,
Are guests ; which, three days, there, may eat and rest.
And reverence Keina this poor Alban folk.

Sith, brought-in Keina, waterhens' wild eggs,
And flummery and fish, the best of their poor diet ;
Them sets before the saints. The holy women,
Moreo'er, bids Keina, to continue, with her,
Till day when builded were their bowers and house.
To those poor outlaws, which, before them, sit ;
Through Pistos' mouth, speak words of life and peace,
The brethren : and how from a far-off coast,
To Duffreynt, they arrived, in broken ship.
Upspake then one, whose polled head fugitive
Him shows, saying, These were they which healed our wounds ;
And when we 'scaped, opened our prison doors,
In wonder-wise, man like the stranger Joseph!
Was he of the war-captives, which thus speaks,
Keth, yet, with fading woad, his warlike face,
Stained. Keth tells, briefly ; from the falling stream,
They, gone to shore, them hid, all that day's sun,
In a sea-cave. They, sith, raught Moridunion ;[1]
Where Durotriges' king, stout Golam, dwells ;
Friend to Duneda : of whom, they being afraid,
Before the dayspring, entered in the house,
Of certain chapman, that, for hides and wool,
And beasts, wont traffic to Silures' coasts :

[1] Probably now Seaton, in Devon.

And, this foreyear, had one of theirs him saved ;
Tempting, in storm, a freshet stream to pass.
Wherefore the man them hid, under neats' hides,
And fleeces, there, two days. He night-time, sith,
By twos and threes, had, privily, sent them forth.
Then they, like wild boars, wallowed in a fen ;
Whence, ochre-dyed, them knew not any man.
By hill-side, moor and forest, went they on,
Till light of day. Sith parted, in three bands,
By only night, they passed, through places waste.
Last, all they reached, with hard and evil hap,
Through Durotriges' wilds, to craggéd cave,
Which in high Mendip ; whereas, other days,
Like wolves, they lived, by nightly stealth of flocks.
One morn, nigh to sea-coast, they descried ship ;
Them seemed, much like some pirate-keel of Erinn.
They saw men row, to land : and drawn, sith, up,
Their vessel, an armed folk ascend from strand.
Then hoping, we, quoth Keth, to save us home,
By sea, fell on their ship's guard, from nigh wood ;
With stones and staves, and slew them : but in fight,
With those, there fell two, by their arrows, slain,

Of ours: and I, third, thrilled of hurled iron spear,
Was left, for dead, fallen, bleeding, on that shore.
The rest, (which, hastily had launched, and climbed aboard;
And hoised-up leathern sail,) bare forth the wind.
Which seen, came again running, to that strand,
The pirate sea-folk: one of whom me smote,
With cudgyl, out of sense. Waked, in night cold,
From swoon, I, in bleak moonshine, saw no man.
Training, in hostile land, these limbs, the third
Day, I, little lack of dead, raught Sacred Alban!
Keth, touched then Joseph's healing hands, besought,
He would assuage this his much rankling smart.
Loud named the name of Jesus, Joseph said,
In looking up to heaven, Be whole! and was
Healed the man's sore. Then cried out some poor Briton;
The gods be come, in our days, unto Alban!

Dawing new morn, this people's magistrate,
From making circuit in the rushy lake,
Comes, in a bascad boat; which, on his back,
To door, Hyn dripping bears, of their moot-hall.
He, erst, cast, towards the brethren, troubled looks;
Strangers and shipwrecked, from far unkenned coast!
But heard the words of Kowain, he salutes
Them, come from king Duneda: and Hyn assigns
Them, daily rate of fish, out of the lake.
Come morrow's day; Hyn, through the holm of Avalon,
Gathers young men; which bowers should frame, and hall,
For those strange guests. Made even, then, a fair plot,
In the king's orchard; they, in circuit, pight
Lopped alder studs; whereon, with osier-wands,
They weave round bowers; and tress, as Britons use,
A seemly hall: conducted to man's height,
They raise, and underprop, the hollow thatch;
And, with thick sedges, bind; and sith clay-cast
The house. Now, towards his setting, the sixth sun,
Before the Sabbath rest; the Syrian brethren
Enter unto their own, and God give thanks:
And that loud temple-chant, in stranger tongue,
The outlaws throng to hear, which they intone.

Conversing thus the saints, in fenny Alban,
They give themselves, to learn the Britons' tongue.
The holy women labour, weaving wool,
Prepare them winter cloth. To priestess Keina,
At her much bidding, Syrian country skill,
They teach; gainst winter, (which, here, rude and waste,
Wherein this people faint,) press curded milk,
To cheese; and cure their marish fish, with salt.
Is there a water-hamlet, in the lake,
Like to an holm; but laid, (the guise of Erinn,)
On thick pile-work. Their fathers, in old days,
Came hither, from o'er seas, in wattle-barks;
Led by their bards; guests of the Alban gods.
But when, no soil, to them, for seat, was given;
Those, (taught, is fame, of beavers in the fen,)
Hewed sallows; and, with mauls, their sharp pile-beams,
Beat, in a shoaling ooze, by the mere's side:
Whereon, they timbered, of the shining reeds,
(And did clay-cast within,) round fisher-bowers.
In their hands, is a dyers' art of Erinn,
In line and wool. They mingle the swart hews,
Of alder rind, the yellow, of sambuc berries;
The ruddy, of crottle-moss. Howbeit, most set,

In music's sacred skill, is their delight;
To weave the trembling chords of Erinn's crowth.

Is this that Avalon, (Alban of the gods),
Holms of the dead; being those accounted dead,
Which therein dwell, men outlaws, fugitives.
But, in the hallowed precinct of the place,
Pale of the gods, may there none dead be laid.
Sith healed was Keth, their sick ones, Avalon Britons
Bring, daily, to the hands of stranger Joseph.
Tremble the most, with agues, and a spirit,
They say, besets them of the rotten fen;
Like hag, with yellow teeth and baleful eyes:
And flickers forth, on deadly wings, the fiend,
By night. That water-hamlet, in the lake,
Men call Cranog.[1] Sigon, who father is,
Of all the water-dwellers; from his youth,
Day hath not seen, but all his world is dark.
Behold his son him brings, in wicker bark,
To Joseph: who him, taking by the hand,
Spake; Be thou of good comfort! The saint toucht
His eyeballs old; and they see heaven's light.
And, without succour, sith, went Sigon forth;

[1] Or Crannog; from *cran* or *crann*, a beam, pile.

Confusedly murmuring, to his gods and Joseph,
Thanks, gladness, (seeing !) unto his bascad boat.
But who his son continues with the saints,
Gazing, with reverence, on their heavenly looks.
He hears them marvellous things, of Christ, relate !
And this is CUAN, singer to the harp.
Sends aged Sigon, back, from the cranog,
A present, from his hand, wild honey-combs,
And linen cloth, unto the men of God.

After these days, by certain fugitives,
Come in to Avalon, have the brethren word,
Of the king's warfare. Dobuni and Durotriges,
Assembled, with their kings, unto Duneda ;
Towards Hafren, thence, had marched. Silures stood,
With their allies, all, on the counter shore.
But rained incessantly had the winter-gods :
So that might neither pass vast rushing flood ;
And each host troubled many adverse omens !
Then fortuned a new case, Cunobelin's son,
With whom ride Verulam lords, by night-time, come,
With thousand spears, that river's ford beset.

One lord of war, sith days of Cassiobellan,

(When Julius passed Kent-seas, with conquering legions,)
From sire to son, have all tribes of South Britain.
Also, his grandson, great Cunobelin,
(Who king in Catuvelaunian royal Verulam ;)
Now Warden is, and warlord of South Britain.
Caratacus, lo! Cunobelin's other son,
(The elder, Togodumnos, went to Rome,)
Is this tall prince ; who, twixt two watchfires, stands,
New kindled, at swift-streaming Severn's strand ;
Mongst young lords, lighted from their long-maned steeds,
Now arrived, with him. Hark, then, as day springs,
Loud cry, to the two camps, Cunobelin's heralds!
Caradoc, O kings! Son to the sire Cunobelin,
Word, of the Warlord's mouth, brings from Caer Verulam!
That were observed, on both your armies' parts,
Which would contend, these days, a sacred truce!
Till may be called, and holden parliament,
In the Sun's plain, of all tribes of South Britain!
Came to him six kings, then, each with his druid,

And ward of spears. Caradoc, Strongarm, declares,
Saluting them ; how lately word Cunobelin,
Received from Rome; that, this year, should the legions,
As in old days of warlord Cassiobellan,
Pass o'er to Britain. Merchants from the Main,
The like affirm, which lately came to Cantion.
Wherefore Cunobelin, by their common gods,
To amity, adjures all tribes and Britons' lords ;
And to let sleep all forepast enmities.
Thus spake, with warlike countenance, and stern voice,
Caradoc ; whose stature, and wise warlike worth,
Persuade all hearts. First, rose up king Duneda ;
Who, father, prince Caratacus, embraced,
(Son to his ancient friend Cunobelin,) quoth ;
He would the hest obey of the Land's Ward !
Uprose MOELMABON, stern Silures' king,
Hoar-haired : and took prince Caradoc, by the hand ;
Thereby, assenting to the king Cunobelin.
With these three, joined those other kings right hands,
Two of each part, which came as adversaries.
Drinking together, then, one sacred cup,

Before the gods, kings swear, (one people of Samoth,)
To wage one war, gainst new-invading Romans.
A certain noble bard, with Caradoc, rides,
Of Belges Gauls, CARVILIOS, far renowned;
Guest now of Britons' lord, in Verulamion.
He, after knit, with solemn feast, accord;
Wherein those kings make common sacrifice,
Touching, with well-taught hand, his golden wires,
Gan warlike lay to chant, with a great voice.
He quoth; Great martial Gaul is thrall to Rome!
Romans, whom oft o'erthrew our fathers old;
And held their town to ransom, Briton Brennus.
What infamy it is, that, now, Gauls serve to Romans,
Their fathers' freedmen! in whose tongues, as women,
And not in warlike deed, lies their most force.
For Romans fight, with wiles, which Gauls despise;
And all in hammered plate, their bodies closed;

And hired men are their soldiers, for base wage:
Gainst whom our naked youth, in vain, contended.
O warlike Brennid kings, O Island Gauls,
What day, embarked Rome's legions, from mainland,
Shall bridge your narrow seas, with thousand keels;
Except all Britons, ready, as one man's sons,
Stand fast in arms, to ward their foster strand;
Look that the like befall this soil of Brennus!
There ceased the Gaulish bard; and Briton lords
Stare on the ground. Sith those six truth-plight kings,
From Hafren's strand, march homeward, with their warriors;
And with Duneda, Caradoc rides to Isca.

Summer is ended: gins now season sad,
When nights increased, and weary is the ground;
And hoar dew lies, all day, on the cold grass;
And falls the flickering leaf. Then Shalum ears,

On crookéd plough-beam leaned, (plough which, in Alban,
His Syrian hands had wrought,) chill-breathing field :
And shoulder two wain-oxen the tree forth.
And lay of Zion this, in his travail, sings!
And laid up, is his hope, in heaven; that when
Lent-month's smooth winds shall fill, with tepid showers,
This furrowed glebe, should spring his Briton grain ;
And, come to Autumn, yield of corn enough,
That eat the brethren might the blesséd loaf,
In a strange land, of Christ's remembrance, both ;
And have, for alms-deed, mongst poor heathen folk.
Winter long twilight, all by day, in Britain,
With stooping mists, seems to those Syrian brethren.
And, Southing, still, the sun, to a spear's height,
Attains uneath : then seems, in heaven's dim light,
As shrouded corse ; whose pale beams shot askance,
Down, on wide-withered field, weak shadows cast.
Then rage out, o'er waste bent, blood-curdling blasts!
Which blow the poplars bare. Silent, from spray,
The small fowl flits, to covert ; and all beasts
Go lean and weary, in the empty frost.
Hungry, the outlaws crouch then, in poor hall,
Christ's brethren part to them Duneda's corn,

That rests; nor they have less. Christ's love they
teach,
And heavenly light, which shines in their own hearts;
And a New Life, to come, on the wide earth.
Whilst all, without, lies cold and comfortless,
They pray and heal the sick, in fenny Alban.
And made is whole, now, of long languishment,
The lady Keina, by the hand of Joseph.
She with the holy women, priestess pure,
Converseth, and still, daily, asks, to hear
More, of Christ's Love. Among the noble maids,
Was Keina one that waited on the queen,
Spouse to Duneda, when she came from Erinn.
After the queen, (the white-armed Havisa,)
Fairest, in Isca, was accounted Keina.
Then she, to Flan, nigh kinsman to Duneda,
Being joined, in happy marriage, mother was
Of sons. Sith widowed Keina was, alas!
When leading Flan, in battle, the king's warriors,
He foremost fell. In Keina's desolate house,
Sith was; when each one nighed his manly age,
A pining sickness took him, and increased,
In all his limbs; insomuch, that, ere ended
A full year, he, too, in her arms, deceased!
And yet did her remain, an only son.

Then, Keina, all days, for this last, the sun,
Besought; she, all nights, sought the starry gods:
And as the needy stretch lean palms, for alms,
So she upcast, to heaven, her tear-worn face!
And to soothsayers, sought Keina, and to wise druids.
From whom returning, to her desolate house,
Departed her son's spirit! She, in night-murk,
Then ran forth, frantic, from abodes of men;
Till, last, in wild moor, she fell down, aswoon;
And lay till dawn: when driving, that way, down,
From the hills, their flocks, some herdfolk poor found Keina!
And they her bare in then, as dead, to Isca;
Where languished, longwhile, Keina, in Havisa's bower;
Aye driven in spirit, as one beside her mind.
And for she most, of women, hapless was;
An extreme passion, on her, daily, seized.
Duneda, at Havisa's asking, after this,
Made Keina Brigida's priestess, light-faced goddess.
Healing, from heaven, now, all her harm allays.
Longtime, might, not suffice the wicker hall,
Where the saints dwell. Must, on the Sabbath days,
Britons, that come to hear the strangers' hymns,
Stand oft in mire; when snow, or rain, without.

Whence taking Ithobal thought, with reed and line ;
He casts, how of just stone and timber work,
To edify a new hall, of prayer, for Christ.
When, to the people of outlaws, this is known ;
Men wend forth, gladly, o'er the frozen mere,
For stones ; some other to the mount ascend,
To hew down wood. But, delved the frozen ground,
And steined ; and laid, of well-trod clay, up walls,
As that shipmaster showed : (his helpers, Phelles,
Pistos and Alexander,) with keen bills,
He, and hoarse saws, then frames, by just assize,
Roof-tree ; and Britons lay, of hurdle-work,
And sedges of the lake, thereon, up, thatch.
All brought now to good point, pargets the house,
Ithobal ; and limns, with ochre, and pourtrays,
With cunning hand, in his Phœnician wise,
Ships, stars, eyes, rudders. And that star is Christ,
The ship His Church, whose rudder is the Spirit ;
That guides souls, into Truth, through world's dark waves.
But the Eye is token of High God above.
At length, lo, in her time, returns the stork !
Now is the old year's winter-sorrow past.
Ewes yean, in pinfold, green-grown is the grass ;
And every ewe hath twins. Is lenten month,

When early riseth day ; with liquid voice,
Of throstles, in the thicks ; and swallows flit,
From Britons' eaves, o'er *Alban mere, aloft.*
Then noised, Caligula was, *in Rome, cut-off :*
And as shire waves dance to a summer strand,
Was heard the nations' laughter, *to far Britain !*
Son of Cunobelin, noble Togodumnos,
Returned from Rome : but the Red Prince, Adminius,
Yet fugitive dwells. And fled had that Adminius,
From Britain ; where, despised his father's age,
Envying his brethren, the king's royal sons,
He cast supplant them, and their sire depose.
Dwells also, in Rome, Icenian BERICOS,
King, whom his folk, (strong nation of East-march,
Of the Isle,) expulsed, and warlike ANTETHRIGUS,
Now had conspired those twain, bewray to Cæsar,
Their foster soil : but, still, did Togodumnos,
Being, that time, in great Rome, frustrate them both ;
Who went up, bearing, to Rome's temple-hill,
The gold-rayed vowéd crown, which king Cunobelin
Sent, Lord of Britain, to the Latin gods.
For had those, with their traitorous hands of gold,
So wrought, with greedy senators, that a day
Might not be named, wherein should sit the senate,
To hear cause of Cunobelin's embassage.

But slain, Ire-of-the-gods! Caligula Cæsar;
Parted from Rome, repassed prince Togodumnos
High Alps; left, in his room, Caratacus:
Whom had the king, their father, after sent,
(Ere few days, to the city, arrived that prince,)
Finish Cunobelin's business and prefer,
For Britain's peace, a new request to Cæsar;
That he would send back Britain's fugitives.

Summer is in, when the dear brother Malchus,
Freedman of Mnason, but now heir, with Christ,
Of God's eternal kingdom, languishes,
In misty air of Alban. Malchus, child,
Keeping, (then Mati named,) in stony field,
Of Edom, kids, was reft of Ishmaelites;
Which him, loud weeping, on a camel, bound.
Then driving on, before, their cattle-preys;
The third day, lateward, in East wilderness,
Those robbers, to their hungry booths, arrived.
Next moon, when sent those down, to buy bread-corn,
(Selling what camels they had reaved and captives,)
To Mnason's father, merchant-man of grain,
At Gaza, was the bondchild Mati sold:
Who orphan; having none, of his nigh kin,

Which might redeem him ; many faithful years,
Served forth his master's house, at the sea-side.
Past now is Pentecost ; and have gathered in
The saints, their harvest, which is tardy, in Britain ;
But yieldeth, to these reapers, hundred fold.
They, kneeling, all, his lowly bed around,
Anoint, with oil, now night-time, brother Malchus ;
Who speechless, dying, them beholds and smiles.
At eve, they bare him forth ; and his dead face,
Seemeth, even as this sun's setting, radious.
And say, communing mongst them, the Lord's saints ;
How, in his ending, had the Lord, to Malchus,
Revealed Himself ; showing, that should His kingdom,
Be established, erelong, even in Utmost Britain !
Wherein, (among them, first,) should rest his flesh.
Follow his bier, the outlaws, to lake side ;
Where all take bark, with Hyn, the magistrate :
And row, over the mere, to certain croft ;
Where lawful is, to lay who dead in Alban.
Britons, which loved the man, have digged there grave.
Then Pistos spake ; how, like to precious seed,
Is this dead corse, till that great day of Christ ;
When shall our brother Malchus be upraised !
Lo, closed is this first tomb ; and all fare forth.
And, hark, how singeth, in his measures, sweet,

The son of Sigon, the high heavenly Rest,
And Malchus, father, gone to blissful place;
Where neither thirst, nor hunger, cold nor aches.
And all take up the burden of his verse,
That o'er the moonlight mere, row, drooping, forth.
Some think, they see stand spirits on lake shore,
And Malchus clothed, in raiment of white light!
Then ferries, each one, silent, to his own.

But harvest past; when wane the pleasant days,
And wasteful winds make bare the russet woods;
And herdmen fold, in stovers, sere and rough,
One noon, with many more from the cranog,
Again, comes, in frail bark, that agéd Sigon.
In the boat's stem, sits, chanting, his son Cuan,
Of the New Life. And all these wend, to Joseph,
To be baptized. They washed, then, rise from death.
Thus, for one dead, were many made alive.

Read, divine Muse, which, from the shining spheres,
Beholdest, like to dark clot, this Middle-Earth;
And us, man's sinful seed, indwelling flesh;
How FORTUNE, demon-goddess of proud Rome,
Outstretched her arm, to smite our foster Britain.

In Britain, chants the warlike bard Carvilios,
With oak-leaves, crowned, the hazard of the time;

And stirs men's hearts, as stormwinds of the North,
Hurl forth vast waves. The bard sings, in Caer Verulam,
In the king's hall; where, till each night far spent,
Sits, mongst his lords, the sire Cunobelin;
Consulting, for the safety of the Isle.
Was Caradoc come, in season of most heat,
Through Gaul Cisalpine, unto gate of Rome;
Whence, after few days, parted Togodumnos;
Whom calls their father, home, to Verulam.
Then days, then many weeks, long moons, they wasted;
Seeking, in vain, an audience of the Senate:
Nor might they, once, come, to the ear of Cæsar;
Who now is CLAUDIUS. To Campania, Cæsar
Soon went, by ship, the Summer heats to pass.
And now, in Rome, be left few magistrates:
And Bericos them hath hired, with Britain's gold.
Erst they in Autumn, to Cunobelin's son,
Respond, by Cæcina's mouth, In Island Britain,
Should answer be returned, to king Cunobelin.
Discerned the People of Rome have, and their Senate,
To send an army, to require that tribute,
Withheld; (which they allege had imposed Julius.)

These words declared, with loud injurious voice ;
He bade, The legate of the Lord of Britain,
Part, within space of thirty days, from Rome !
Deliberate Rome's proud consuls, and the Senate ;
Should all the world be Rome : that no more Rome,
Through wild irrupting nations, from the North,
Were brought in peril. Chiefly and it behoves,
Cut off the seed of Brennus ; whence sprung dukes,
Of barbare hosts, which have o'erthrown Rome's armies.
Moreo'er, then gan incense, in public audience,
The Romans, crying out, one Caius Marcius,
Their tribune, of the house of Marcus Manlius,
With his right arm, their quadrate temple-arx,
Showing ; and those same hard outstanding stones,
Whereby climbed, yore, into Tarpean rock,
The Sénones Gauls, Gauls, namely, of Briton Brennus,
Brennus, that burned this City of Romulus,
(Whose sons, then, them redeemed, at price of gold !)
And gore-stained heaps, left Rome's razed streets and walls.
Hail, double-headed hill Capitoline !
Which sempiternal Destiny hath named,
Head of the nations. Hail yond triple fane !

Hail, august images of great Rome's trine gods!
That angry, erewhile, last weary of their pride,
Cast out, again, from Rome, those Sénones Gauls.
Nor is, I say, even yet, that old reproach,
Redeemed, whilst Isle of Brennus yields no tribute.
I say, no tribute to world-conquering Rome!
Moreo'er marched other swarms, after those swarms,
Cimbers; whose dukes were nephews to old Brennus;
That, slain your consuls, overthrew your armies.
We owe it to our sires, to Rome's great gods;
That pest out of the North, that Cerberus,
In Gaul now tamed, in Britain, to subdue.
Go up, great Roman gods, before the legions!
So shall our prætors lead, in chains, to Rome,
Britannic kings; that, with joy of all Romans,
From yond cliffs, were they hurled! which besieged Brennus!
Mongst Britain's exiles, which are, now, in Rome,
Is Trinobantine, noble, Dumnoveros;

Dubnovelaunos' nephew, whom great Julius
Restored to antique reign of Androgorios.
Him Cassiobellan, Catuvelaunian king,
Had conquered, in old wars, and slain. His son
Sith, Tasciovant, all marches, beyond Thames,
Subdued of Trinobantine Eppilos:
And, save the isles, all Cantion coast he wan;
Isles, whither merchants sail, in Summer ships,
From Gaul, the Britons' tinny ores to lade.
Seized on those isles, then, climbing base Adminius,
By fraud; and ever since, withheld by arms.

Found refuge the expulsed lord Dumnoveros,
Erst, with an Almain king, beyond the Rhine;
Where was his daughter born. The Almain queen,
Her EMBLA named. But white-browed Melusina,
Her mother, died, in birth of their sweet babe.

Sith Dumnoveros, to the duke of legions,
That river passed; whence sought he sovereign Rome:
Where mad Caligula Cæsar him received.
And Gaius[1] sware; as late he bridged sea-gulf,
He Ocean flood, to Britain, would o'erride;
Displeased, that any, therein, should wear diadem,
Without his license. But scorned Dumnoveros
Mad Gaius; and rejoiced at his swift death.

[1] Gaius, Roman emperor, was surnamed Caligula.

That *imperator*, lately, in a full Senate,
Expounded his intent: in subdued Britain,
Fierce Gauls to plant. In further isle of Erinn,
The German tribes: that, hemmed of boisterous seas,
Those truculent nations, no more, might brast forth.
Had Xerxes hardly bridled Hellespont,
Which liker river is; but he, Rome's Cæsar,
Tyrrhenian seas. Only his godhead's self,
That great Earth-serpent, Ocean's stream, he vaunts,
Could tame. Should he not more be titled Great,
Than half-Greek Alexander, Philip's son;
Which did but women-nations, of the East,
With Macedon's long phalanxed spears, surprise:
But he vast seas, which flow betwixt two worlds;
And Island-Nation of men-giants subdued.
Then, Scythians would he fence, with mighty wall;
Whom none can tame, not even the immortal gods.
For such, quoth he, he would this People and Senate,
Discern him some new honour; as to name him,
New Heracles, or else Second Romulus.

His cares, that Cantion king, to brain-sick Cæsar,
Exposed, responded Galage;[1] he his prayer,
As god, accepted: and, as *imperator*,
Would vindicate his right, by arms of Rome.

[1] The same word as Caligula.

But, in his private art; wherein he, thrice,
Was crowned first driver of imperial Rome,
The Briton king, from Isle renowned for chariots;
He challengeth run, with him, a career.
Howbe vain were vie with him, which hath steeds,
Immortal seed, of swift Sicanian winds;
Such being, that able are his matchless teams,
And he, as Phœbus, standing them to rule!
Through heaven's vast steep, draw day-cart of the sun.
Among the princes, exiles from Isle Britain,
Did first fell Bericos persuade mad Cæsar,
Like thunder-god, with lightning in his hand,
Rise, subdue Briton kings. But Gaius slain,
On Rome's new lord, fawns Bericos; and is Claudius
Well-pleased, to hear like words of Red Adminius.
At the imperial knees, they wallow, both!

Already Rome's new Cæsar, Claudius, dreams,
Beyond sea-waves, to conquer a new world.
Were named, these days, what legions should invade
BRITANNIA: and merry of his foolish thought,
Waxed Claudius; but Rome's Britons sad and weary;
Even those which late conspired, gainst their own state;
Foreseeing, that, (like as Gaul,) subdued Isle Britain;

Their children should be subject unto Romans.
Britons whom parted their tribes' enmities,
Draw now together ; that, at least, might sound,
In their dull ears, sweet homely speech, in Rome.
Adminius, who was wont, at Camulodunum,
To drink, in wide-mouth horns, the dulcet mead,
Mingled with poignant juice of quicken-berries ;
Now drinks deceitful cups, beyond the Alps,
In season of most heat, of blood-red wine :
Drinks drunken ; and still drowseth forth his time.
He felt, then, all his inward breast aflame.
Sick, with a fever, on his bed, he lies,
Now, and deadly dreams. Against his fearful soul,
The angry gods send furies, serpents, chains.
He ofttimes cries out, for his father's son,
Caratacus ; who, he hears, arrived in Rome.
Past skill of leech, past hope ; last, sends, Adminius
For Caradoc : and of him, who comes, anon,
With sighs, embraced ; the prince forgiveness asks ;
Confessed, he compassed had his brother's death,
Amidst his voyage ; when he, from Rome, should part.
Wherefore, to take his journey, Adminius warns,
By other paths, till he, vast Alps o'erpass.
Then, groaning, he laments, he dies in Rome ;
And shall, in Britain, he betrayed, be named,

Of Britons' renowned sire, ignoble son!
(There was a fervent greatness, in his soul,
Though it unrighteous were!) With faint voice, then,
He prayed his brother, his last message bear,
Beseeching pardon, by the saviour gods,
Of their king-father, sire Cunobelin;
That, after funeral flames, were not his soul,
To wander, with the ghosts of parricides,
Condemned, ah, in most dread and darksome place!
Then godlike prince Caratacus, a purse,
Takes from his bosom; and he bids Adminius,
Be of good comfort. This, their father, sends,
To signify, for his rebellious part,
Forgiveness, lo, his signet! It receives,
With joy, the dying prince, and long beheld.
So prayed of Caradoc; might be borne, to Britain,
His shorn hair-locks, home, to Caer Verulam:
That laid their father's hands, on them; Cunobelin,
Pronounce, might, the remission of all curse!
And, (with this ring-gold, on his finger,) burned,
His body; his cinders might, closed in an urn,
Be sent, to be mound-laid, in foster Britain,
Slow-streaming Ver beside; where the chief druids,
Sprinkling the blood, on them, of sacrifices,
Should loose, at length, his soul from punishment.

And, yet, forgiveness of his father's sons,
He, dying, asks: then charged, warn Dumnoveros,
The City he and also Italy, anon, depart;
For cause he did accuse him unto Claudius!
Sith gan he, spent his spirits, some little sleep.
Then went forth, softly, Caradoc, to the street;
Musing of these things and to breathe the air,
With the companions of his enterprise,
KEVIN and IDDON, lords of Verulamion:
And oft those turn, to listen, at the stair!

It fortuned, that same tide; from Cæsar's palace,
With torches' light, a litter is borne forth,
Of purpled servants of the imperial house:
And they returning, from the lady Octavia,
Which daughter is to Claudius, yet a child;
The daughter, Embla, of Briton Dumnoveros,
Should convey home. Their wont, is daily, thus,
To meet: for the young noble virgins, both,
Are entire friends. And, with the damsel, is
Her Briton nurse. Now, in a neighbour street,
Were risen, from supper, riotous young lords;
That full of wine and surfeit, with great cries,
And ribald song, their wilful way gan hold.
These meet, at a cross-street, with Cæsar's servants;

With whom they, by their torches' reeking light,
Espy veiled women ; one, of excellent beauty,
Borne in her litter. Look, then, ruckling, cries
One of the revellers ; these Minerva bear;
Out of her temple, have they stolen her!
Or, Herc'les! fellows, gracious Venus is,
Goddess of women's laughter and love's mirth.
Unbuckle slaves! Set down, ye robber knaves,
Undo this curtained casket. Any Roman,
May temple-breakers slay, his fellow cries ;
And he those bearers smote. What thing, is this?
Or here is living maid, or virgin goddess;
Yet virgin wot not I, wot only Jove.
I, therefore, I; since both are Wots, am Jove!
But what pernicious thing, thou old Leandugs,
With whimpled leer, art, that, like ambling jade,
Upon three legs, before thy goddess, goes?
Fellows, since all, (he cries,) we cannot have her,
Cast lots, now! Then he laid, who foremost was,
His ribald hand, upon the virgin's litter.

They stagger, lo, together, and contend,
See her veiled beauty. Trembles Embla; is nigh
None to deliver, in her sore distress.
Gin beat those, which resist them, Cæsar's servants!
Small reck they of Claudius, in their drunken mood.
Shrill calls the nurse, then, on her Britain gods,
Red Taran,[1] Belisama,[2] and Camulus![3]

The Britain woman's cries happed Caradoc hear.
He snatched the staff of Kevin, old lame lord,
And ran, fleet-foot, among them, in a moment;
Where few and heartless slaves make weak defence;
Men which have half their souls and manhood lost.
The cause perceived, anon; prince Caradoc
Vowed to Mars Camulus, battle-god, an horse.
Hath stiff and mighty brawns the Verulam prince;
Who on those Romans, falls, with Britain oak.

They then descry him, in that flickering light,
(Who goodliest man, long-haired Caratacus,
Mongst the *bracati*, strangers, now in Rome,)
And call him Briton hound, whom will they beat;
Aye, and slay him, if he bite. And swear great oaths,
Those revellers, they would bear away the women,
For that withholden tribute. What, by Fidius!

[1] God of Thunder. [2] Goddess, with attributes of Minerva.
[3] God, with attributes of Mars.

Hath not more wives, a man, than one, in Britain,
Or twain, or ten? or else lied godded Julius.
Why should this, with the wooden glaive, them envy;
An only Briton maid, among them all.
Nor this the rightful heir is, but Adminius,
Of him, who called is, lord, or king, of Britain;
Adminius, that come, drunken, in our Senate,
Was hailed, Friend and Confederate of the Romans!
Unto whom all lordship should revert of Britain,
To be established, by the Roman arms:
Who promised, seized of Britain's diadem,
To send his brethren, hostages, to great Rome.
Another cries, Is not this oak-staff youth
The same, of whom decreed was, in our Senate,
He void the City of Rome, in few days' space?
Jove Father! Romulus' seven hills, to-night,
Shall Oak-staff quit, leaving, Ædepol! his corse.
Have at him! fellows, play we now mad druids.

Bind we this calf; and, sith, with rusty knife,
(Call we it golden sickle,) carve his throat:
It shall be a game, (me Hecate!) now, to see,
Like some night-crow, breeched Briton ghost
flit forth!
Venus! or will this slay us all, to-night!
Ware lord! (in Britons' tongue,) shrieked that
old wife,
Their secret steel! She seen had treacherous
gleam,
Flash from their bosoms. Turned Caratacus,
And a young Roman smote, smote on the pan.
(He whom Caradoc smites, shall not soon speak again!
Dead-slain, such lies, or else a broken man.)
Two, felled, lie without motion, on the stones.
Then he, assembling all his matchless force,
Against the remnant, goes. So cometh lord Iddon,
Old man of war. He caught a torch, lets drive,
At one who steals, (and heavy is his hand,
Stern witty hands, to handle nigh and sore!)
Behind his neck, to stab Caratacus.
In that, to Britons' gods, he breathed his prayer;
That might, to his shrunk limbs, one little hour,
Return their antique pith: as when his spear,
Made of a trusty tree, (in Gaul, that war

Was; he to horse,) bore through stout Roman captain;
Whose harness he, in Hesus' grove, uphanged.
Heard that grim god; new strength, in him, infused,
Immortal! Iddon falls on murderous Romans,
With shout, that seemed, in Rome, of barbare armies.
They scatter, from him, fast. Prince Caradoc,
From lewd profaning Roman hands; in this,
That noble Briton virgin hath released.
Many, from solers dark, of neighbour houses,
Are crying to the watch! Now the night round
Approaches; hark, with heavy hasting tread!
And, from the nigh wine-taverns, come men forth.
Unto whom, cry mockers, from above; Is Brennus,
(Because were torches fallen, at their stairs,)
That kindles, with his Gauls, again, proud Rome.
Who fight, then cease. Would, sobered, those young lords,
Take up their fallen ones; and 'scape through the watch.
Departed, from them, is the heat of wine:
But the street's end, the round, with chains, have shut.
There are they taken. The watch, Caratacus,

Find standing over some new-fallen young Roman;
Rolling, like a roused lion, his angry eyes.
He bleeds! They know him, in whose other hand,
A bloody staff, is prince Caratacus.
But who this one, seems dead, on the cold stones?
Are these slaves Cæsar's! those, young Senators!
And, in yond porch, were found the trembling women;
Saved from this litter, here, lies overthrown!
Is Iddon, with fierce looks, which them defends.
The rest they hale then, slaves, with torches spent,
From shadows, forth. Who captain of the watch,
Discerns them all, with lanterns: their device
And livery is Cæsar's; and this litter Cæsar's!
And he, among, enquires, with an hoarse voice;
And bending-to their lights, men of his guard;
What be these fallen, and why this one lies dead?
And lies that other, wounded, without speech;
Both plainly, and by their weed, of noble house.

Some other revellers sought, where, in foul place,
To hide them ; but, on them, is laid arrest.
Sustain, commands the captain, who have wounds :
Some bear the dead ; the rest bring on, to ward.
  But, for all this, is none injurious hand,
Laid on Caratacus, Britannic legate ;
Whose person sacred is, by Roman laws.
Only that officer bids him, to beware
Of kindred of the slain. Some, his armed men,
This sends, with lanterns, ward the damsel home.
  Caradoc and Briton lords, with Embla, who sighs,
What, for past fear, and to have seen men's deaths ;
Follow to house of Cantion Dumnoveros.
There giveth now, softly, thanks the royal maid ;
Her voice like flute, for sweetness, when she bids,
Come to her doors, the prince Caratacus,
Goodnight! And would have parted the prince thus ;
Because was foe her father, Dumnoveros,
To king Cunobelin, called the Sire of Britain.
  But that old lord, misgiving him his heart ;
For so long tarries Embla, issued forth,
Was ; and in shadow, waits her, of his porch :
Unto every sound, he bends his listful ears ;
For this is Rome, and all, in Rome, he fears!

Unto whom, then, hieing, on her aged feet;
Begins, from point to point, with panting breath,
The nurse, as yet dismayed, thing happed to-night,
Rehearse. That old, this young lord, saved her lady.
Britons both, by their speech; and seem some lords,
In far-off Rome. But Embla spake, anon;
Father, is this the prince Caratacus,
Unto whom we owe, for our saved lives, all thanks!
His right hand, to Cunobelin's son, advanced,
(Alwere he a little loath,) then, Dumnoveros.
Right courteously, it take those lords, again,
Of noble Verulamion. Dumnoveros
So brings them, through his porch, into his hall.
There sit they on Roman stately thrones; and sees
Prince Caradoc, son unto the Lord of Britain,
Embla, unveiled, like daughter of the sun:
When she, yet trembling, for the fear forepast,
Cast about her sire's neck, her virgin arms.
Seemed then, to rain down, from the maiden's neck,
Like to sun's summer beams, her golden hairs;
Part glistering yet, what, for the late distress,
With teary droppéd dews of her clear eyes;
That, weeping, shine, as the blue gulf of heaven.
For dread, is, somedeal, cruddled, in her cheeks,

The maiden rud, like roses, ivory white ;
Whilst, hark, the message of her virgin spirit,
She óf those twinnéd coral lips, sends forth !
(Which hedged round, as with clear pearls of Isle Britain,)
Like silver descant upon harp of bards !
And Embla sees ; and wist not, that she loves,
Her godlike saviour, of an hostile house.
Yet feels she jeopardy, would her gentle life ;
And might she save thee prince Caratacus !
Now and she, alone, perceives, such eyes hath love ;
How hidden hurt, under his cloak, he hath.
Cries Embla, hastily, anon ; Bring hither nurse,
The pots of salve, in store, with linen fine,
And sponge and ewer! Albe the roses flush,
Of maiden modesty, up, in her cheeks ;
Frank and courageous, she, approached the prince,
Him made to sit down, in her father's stall.
And on his flesh feels Caradoc her pure breath,
She kneeling him beside, from maiden breast ;
Sweet as, in spring mead, is the mower's swathe.
And whilst the virgin's hands him wash and bind,
The Briton prince wox joyous of his wound !
Bade, with new solemn thanks, good Dumnoveros,
Those lords come oft, and prince Caratacus.

Of former variance, will they naught record ;
But only of sweetness of their foster-soil.
Be not all Britons, kindred, in great Rome?
But taking, soon, his leave ; Caratacus,
Joyous, in his heart's sadness, thence outwends ;
To wot, if yet awakens sick Adminius.
Approaching ; comes, then, to their careful ears
Sound of lament, shrill outcries, in the house ;
Plaint of the woman-thrall, which was his wife :
And, in that point, some great man's retinue,
Arriving, stands, with torches, at the porch.
It is, they hear, the Senator Hostilius,
Whose sire was *hospes* of old Tasciovant.
To him, gives answer, one of the house-servants,
The Lord of Britain's son, now passed from life !
Who, dying, called them, in his last access ;
As he, of weight, had somewhat to impart.
They hear, in his sick frenzy, yelled Adminius,
Of snake-haired furies, in hell-wain, pursuing
His soul, with scourges, down to murk abysm.
He mad, then, ere there any might withhold him
Raught knife, which lay hid, under his bed's head,
(As all his life was base and treacherous !)
And did, with eyes aflame, riving his breast,

Fordo himself; and so, uttering thick curse,
Died presently. Low, lies Adminius' corse,
Dreadful to look on, bloody, on the face;
Fallen from the bed, where his last throes him cast.
To the death-chamber, mounts Caratacus.
He looks with heavy cheer, on dead Adminius;
And those lords with him! And they, sith, cut off;
As he, the dead, had promised, his long locks.
There, left the Roman Senator Hostilius,
Caradoc turns, sad, to hall of Dumnoveros.
Then take they counsel, far into the night,
With that good sire. In fine, concluded was;
When have they quenched Adminius' funeral flame,
And gathered were his ashes, in an urn;
That all, in some disguise, should part from Rome.
They hear then, hath Hostilius lodged request,
That were just funerals made for dead Adminius,
Tomorrow-even, at the public cost;
For cause he was Confederate named of Romans.

Now is that morrow, and the evening hour.
And, lo, a stranger dead, Adminius' corse,
Through Roman street, on purple bier, borne forth.
Black-gowned, the public lictors go before.
Shrill funeral pipes, then, slow and mournful note.

Few Britons follow, to that burning place ;
And of those few, few loved Adminius.
Now be they come, without the city's port :
And halt before walled court ; behold, where is
The builded pyre. There, taking up the herse,
The public servants bear it on the wood ;
Which Caradoc fires, then, with averted face ;
As custom is ! Hostilius, lastly, cast
In parfumes ; whilst the raging flames upmount.
Few linger, till consumed the stranger's corse.
Sprinkles, with olive-branch and water pure,
The Roman priest, already, them that part.
Sole, rests Caratacus ; who then the same night,
Upgathered, hastily, in a Roman urn,
Adminius' yet warm ashes, did bear home.
He, Briton prince, a cypress-bough set up,
Then, sign of Roman mourning, at his gate.

BOOK XI

ARGUMENT

CARATACUS and Dumnoveros journey to Britain. In the long way, Embla is betrothed to prince Caratacus. They passed the narrow seas, come to king Cunobelin, in Verulam. Caratacus makes known, to his father, the ill success of their Roman embassage, and Adminius' death: and how Cæsar's legions will now invade Britain. Cunobelin and Dumnoveros are made friends. Marriage of Embla and prince Caratacus. Cunobelin sends his heralds, to kings of South Britons; calling them, to solemn sacrifice and parliament, in the Sun's Plain. A grievous pestilence is, in Verulam.

Cunobelin journeys, to precinct of the Sun, and that god's great temple of the Hanging-stones. Carvilios chants to the there assembled Britons. Story of Gaulish ship-king Divicos; who vows himself, before the gathered Britons, to death, for destruction of the Romans. Captive Roman legionaries contend, with a like number of chosen young warriors, of South Britons. Aged king Cunobelin deposes the warlord's belt. Caratacus, yet pale from sickness, now arrives. Dumnoveros girds prince Togodumnos, with the warlord's belt. Cunobelin's last behests. Tiding of that king's death. Deceased, in his journey, he is borne to Verulam. Togodumnos and Caratacus divide their father's kingdom. An old war-ban, from days of Cassiobellan.

Caratacus and Embla ride to Camulodunum. An Almain pirate-fleet is lying in the town-hythe. The pirate ship-lords, men of insolent carriage, drink in the king's hall.

Other Almain keels are come in to Branodunum; and with them is the ethling THOROLF. Thorolf rides, with Hiradoc to the parliament of kings, at Verulam.

Volisios assembles parliament of North Britons' kings. Velaunos is chosen, to lead their warfare, against the Romans.

Carvilios cometh to Mona. Priests of the temple-cave, in vain, persuade him, that he should not pass to ERINN. The Gaulish bard embarks, with two disciples, in a wattled skiff. Wafted of the wind, they touch, the third morrow, to the Sacred Island's shore. Salvage guardians of that coast, bind him, at the sea-brinks; and hale to doom-hill, whereon sits the land's king, Palador. Maelunni, that lord's high druid. Carvilios speaks of the nigh coming of invading legions; and chants an hymn of the sun-god. Palador gives beasts, to sacrifice, for ransom of the strangers' blood. He, himself, leads them to his royal hall.

MANANNAN, master of traffic, man half-divine, repairs to Britain. His far voyages, great bounty and passing riches. Caratacus parts forth, with Manannan, in chariot; to visit all the kings of South Britons.

BOOK XI

At day, sent an apparitor, the consuls,
Indict; from City of Rome, Caratacus,
Legate, son to Cunobelin, Lord of Britain;
Depart, within days three; and, without tarrying,
From Italy pass; for he hath slain a Roman!
Night fallen, went Caradoc forth, the Prince of Britain,
From Roma's Viminal gate, with lords of Verulam:
Where, as, betwixt them both, accorded was;
Him Dumnoveros meets, from other part,
With Embla and Cantion women. Nigh that place,
Is to the college of Rome's Fetial priests.
They, in hired covered carpents,[1] thence, set forth:
So journey on together, all that night;
And see, no more, great Rome, when morrow breaks!
Henceforth, by long paved way, Flaminian,
That noble Britain-company forthride,

[1] Lat. *carpentum*: a covered cart; perhaps, (as crate-work cart,) of Celtic origin.

In fellowship; and is daily more increased,
The lovely bond, twixt Caradoc and bright Embla.
Then gins devise, in heart, Caratacus;
Prefer the antique right of Dumnoveros,
Before Cunobelin, to the isles of Cantion.
And each part should forgive all injuries,
Forepast: so were Kent's isles, after his day,
His daughter's dower. To him, her father dear,
Those lords assenting hath, now, promised her.
And gage prince Caradoc is, for Dumnoveros;
When they shall have arrived, again, in Britain.
With good adventure, they, o'er mighty Alps,
Now passed, their journey hold forth, through Main Gaul:
Till last, they, come down to that Ictian port;[1]
Discern, thence, long white loom of Cantion's cliffs.
And found there ship of Kent, ready to pass;
They mount her board. So, having prosperous voyage,
The same day they, to Rutupiæ,[2] arrive;
Where a glad people welcome Caradoc.

Thence Cantion's noble youth, in vestures white,
Them bring forth, on their way, with pomp of chariots;
Wherein his mastery every one would show,

[1] Portus Itius or Ictius. [2] Richborough, in Kent.

On rushing wheels, in gentle Embla's view :
So she is fair, like goddess heavenly bright.
Now, at Durovern-on-Stour, they bridle draw,
Old city of Cloten and of gentle Esla.
Where grassy mound, to-day, their tomb, is seen.
Next sun, they, tardy, arrive at Verulamion :
And find, the warlike sire Cunobelin,
Hath, long, lain bedrid, sick, in heavy age.
Being falsely noised, of late, the great king's death ;
Were stirs and tumults, mongst all subject tribes,
Whose kings are, namely, of old hostile house,
Of Commius ; whence, with power of Catuvelaunians,
Was, from Caer Verulam, yester, issued forth,
With rushing chariots, royal Togodumnos.
Kevin and Iddon, with Caratacus ;
(Returned now home, from Roman embassage,)
Enter before the king, that, on his bed,
On pillows, sits upstayed. The sire, they greet ;
And, kneeling, kissed his father, Caradoc.
Then they rehearse, at large, their ill success ;
And namely that proud answer of the Senate !
And, after this, restores Caratacus
His signet royal, unto king Cunobelin ;
And shows, with troubled voice, Adminius' death.
This Tuscan urn, which halting Kevin bears,

Under his cloak, his cinders doth enclose.
Lo, wounden, on the lid, his tawny locks,
Cut-off, in Rome. The warlike, agéd, sire,
Moaned, at that sight; and, trembling, on his bed,
Fell back, dismayed. Was longtime Red Adminius,
His only son; for Guenthia, royal spouse,
Was barren certain years. Recovering breath,
The sire him bowed, those yore-loved yellow locks,
As, yet, sheen head were of his little son!
Once more, to kiss. Sate up then king Cunobelin,
And, in his palsied hands, that urn receiving,
Pronounced, devout, the lord of royal Verulam,
(To witness, called his Catuvelaunian gods!)
A father's last forgiveness of all wrongs.

He sent, then, for chief Catuvelaunian druid,
Mempricios; who, come in, before Cunobelin,
Clad in blue amice, like the Summer heaven;
With groans, the king commands him sacrifice,
At morrow's eve, for dead Adminius,
Swart beves, one for each year of his son's age;
And be there, supplication, in Ver's mead;
Where all should eat, to memory of the dead.

Companions of Cunobelin, in old wars,
Of Catuvelaunians, with their neighbour tribes,
Then commune, with the king, Kevin and Iddon.

They tell; how, longtime sojourning, in great Roma,
They might not come, to Cæsar's audience.
Last menaced them the consuls; and their threat
Is, Rome will send her legions into Britain!
And how much sickness was, in Rome; in days,
When they arrived, of the hot summer star:
And taken, with a fever, was Adminius.
And, in what night he passed; they, nigh his house,
Heard sounding women's cries, in a dim street,
In Britons' tongue: whither, they, running, found,
Women, of their own speech; that wept, beset,
Of Roman young men, in their wantonness.
And how them Caradoc succoured; whose strong hand
Slew one or twain, to ground; wherefore denounced
The consuls, they should part, anon, from Rome.
And, newly, was come forth, from Cæsar's palace,
That noble Briton virgin, which was saved.
And how she washed and salved, they tell, and bound,
Prince Caradoc's wound. Moreover they record
Words of Adminius, how, that dying son,
Message of peace, to king Cunobelin,
His father, sent. They, also, Dumnoveros,
Found, well affectioned, towards this royal house.

But, when were those went forth; speaks Caradoc,

Privily, in his father's ear, of Dumnoveros :
Was, Dumnoveros, with them in their voyage ;
And how his daughter is that noble maid.
And of the dear accord made, twixt them both.
And how his soul loves Embla, above all being.
And, still, made Caradoc semblant, as that were,
Those lingered yet in Gaul. Cease Caradoc's lips
Then speak ; for yearns, within him, brother's heart,
Speed, with armed band, and war-team and scythe-chariot,
To field, anon ; in aid of Togodumnos !
But comes, with rushing steeds, lo, early, at morrow,
That prince again ; in their sire's bronze-axed scythe-cart.
Follow his army, afoot, more slowly on.
Hath, noble bard, (Cunobelin's guest,) Carvilios,
Riding, from tribe to tribe, twixt hostile camps,
Prevailed, with Briton lords, for Britain's peace :
All, now, shall turn their hostile arms, gainst Rome.
Omens announce nigh coming of the legions.
How joys each prince, then, see his brother's face !
Caradoc sith Togodumnos draws apart ;
To tell him his heart's hope. The elder went
In, to their father, prays, even for his sake,
Restore the Cantion isles to Dumnoveros.

And well it were, all breaches to be healed,
Amongst the tribes, ere coming of Rome's legions.
Should not strong aid send well-affectioned Kent,
Of thousand matchless scythe-wheel chariots?

The like, Gaul's noble bard persuades, Carvilios;
With words, which on his tongue, inspire the gods.
Cunobelin grants, that would, before his death,
See stablished, his loved son, Caratacus:
Alwere, is, from old days, in his heart, left,
A little wrath, gainst Cantion Dumnoveros!

Bring-in then the king's sons, as newly arrived
Wayfaring guests, that king and royal maid.
That those are noble, under simple weed,
Their very countenance showeth. Before Cunobelin,
Father of her loved prince, Caratacus,
Lo, Embla kneels, those kingly hands, to kiss.
But that stern lord, when he beheld her face,
So like the hew of Guenthia, his spouse-love,
Deceased; and whose chaste womb did bear his sons,
Loved Caradoc, and, ere, martial Togodumnos;
Being inly moved, covered with his two palms,
Awhile, his brows! then, stooping, kissed her cheeks.
He greets, sith, Trinobantine Dumnoveros;
Whose long constraint, even in his enemy's court,

Now ended is. Ends sadness in all hearts ;
And each looks, gladly, upon the other's face !
Come the twelfth night of the new moon, from this,
In Catuvelaunian royal Verulamion ;
Prince Caradoc, son of great Cunobelin,
And Embla of Dumnoveros were made one ;
With gladness of all hearts and bridal feast :
And all the people, dancing in her streets,
Whose brows, with guirlands deckt, them loudly bless.
Pomp of his men-of-war, leads Togodumnos,
With blowing joyful trumps and martial shows.
The warlike bard of Gaul, Carvilios, chants,
His forehead crowned with holy misselden,
Whose leaves, (the old king's gift,) of beaten gold,
The berries are fair pearls of Island Britain ;
(Gracing their bridal, sleeps his sterner note,)
Lays of sweet love, to-night, in the king's hall.
And seemed his words, (heard mongst cups of sweet mead ;)
That fall, on listful ears, a chain of gold.

But danger instant of the Roman arms,
Cunobelin, Lord of Britain, in swift chariots,
His heralds sends, to all kings of South Britons ;
Bidding, to temple of the hanging-stones,

That stands, midst Belin's plain, lord of the Sun,
To sacrifice and common parliament.
In Cassiobellan's Verulam, after this,
Was grievous sickness; and soon sore increased.
Then heard oft funeral wailing, in her streets:
Dies flower of valiant youth, were like have done
Proud deeds, in war with Rome. That ill on prince,
Now heavy lies, beloved Caratacus;
(Druids it ween, infection brought from Rome;
Derne whisper runs, in Red Adminius' locks!)
By him, the beauty of Embla wakes and weeps;
And watches, with her, martial Togodumnos.
Then made Cunobelin solemn sacrifice,
For his loved son; and Caradoc revives.

But come day, when Cunobelin, lord of Britons,
Established had, to set forth, from Caer Verulam;
In wicker litter, is the sire, infirm,
Borne, on men's shoulders, towards the sacred plain;
With a great pomp of chariots, slow, ensuing;
Wherein ride lords, chief magistrates and high druids.
They journey: and his shield-bearer the king's arms,
And dragon-targe, lo, in the royal scythe-cart,
Upholds. They lodge, next eve, nigh where fenced dune,

Calleva,[1] on yonder woody hill, is seen,
City of the GULEDIG, swart SEGONTORIX ;
Who, mongst all Belges' kings, most war-renowned,
Which nephews are, to antique Commius.
Rides forth, salute them, king Segontorix,
And sheep he sends, to the king's camp and beves ;
And mead and bread : for, midst his sacred voyage,
Cunobelin were not lawful, lodge in walls.
Thence marched ; they, three days, journey and now approach,
In that wide plain, to precinct of the sun,
Where great choired temple of the hanging-stones ;
Which, fame is, giants had poised to the day's god ;
Mongst grave-hills, where dead nations lie around.
They find Duneda, and lords of the West tribes,
Already arrived ; with whom much people and druids
Assembled : mongst whom, on tall Gaulish steed,
Carvilios sits. To him, with listful ears,
All throng. He cunning hand, to dreaming crowth,
Applies ; and lifts, to heaven, great clarion-voice.
From throng to throng, Gaul's noble vates chants,
And Britons follow him, from how to how,
Like sheep-flocks. He them coming of Rome's legions,
Foreshows : and how more in malicious arts,

[1] Probably Silchester.

Than manly valiance, lies proud Romans' force;
Men hewed like thralls. Plate-clad, the legionaries
Sally, stand fast, keeping, aye, even ranks;
At one man's word; or launch forth sleet of darts:
Whose hauberks bronze, and sallets on their heads;
That Gaulish glaive and spear, might hardly pierce,
Nor their thick battle-ranks, the scattered brunt
May break, of naked warriors, though more valorous.
At morrow, arrived Armoric Divicos,
One who is called a king of Summer ships.
Pirates, those wont reave, on some Roman coast,
Steeds; whereon mounting-forth, they harry and burn.
His winter wonne is with free kings of Almaigne,
Beyond the flood of Rhine. Five captains, Divicos,
(This Gaul,) hath slain, with his right hand, of Rome;
Not without scars seen on his hardy face.
Being lately, in stress of storm, come Divicos in,
With ships, to a South haven, in Island Britain,
He heard; how parliament, warlord king Cunobelin,

Had called, of all South tribes, in Belin's plain:
Whose lords convene there, to consult, with him;
And that, concerning Rome's invading threat.
With guides, rode Divicos, thither, then; and leads
Twelve bounden captives, that were Roman soldiers,
Taken in a longship, with their arms and harness.
On startling Gaulish steed, borne in his vessel,
Stern Divicos rides. Before the temple-gates,
He, lighting, joins hands with the Briton kings.
Hang, griesly, at Divicos' saddle-bow, five polls,
Namely of those captains he had slain of Romans;
Pitched visages, that have silver scales, for eyes;
And on whose grinning teeth, spread leaf of gold.
Stern Divicos mounts, again; and all men marvelling,
He a green mound ascends. Thence, with main voice,
That seemed of battle-trumpet's throat, he cries;
Britons, when I behold your warlike face,
Methinks, ye should, full well, contend with Romans!

Was Divicos of Armoric royal house:
But fallen in an outlawry, his lordship lost,
Captain of desperate men, he dwelled in woods;
Till day, his wife and child, by some of his,
For numbered silver, were betrayed to Romans.

He hardly himself pursued, by marsh and heath,
Had 'scaped, by only fleetness of his horse.
  Bethought him Divicos, then, take some chief
    Roman ;
Whose life should ransom home his wife and son.
But, with forged words, came certain messengers,
To him, as from the Roman magistrate,
Granting, laid down his arms, he should have peace.
Let him come in ; and on Mars' altars, swear
Fealty to Rome, and promise to pay tribute.
But an eavesdropper of the Romans' talk,
Old client of his house, warned Divicos,
Of their intent, him secretly to slay.
  By covert night, he went to soldiers' camp,
With one young warrior, kinsman of his wife,
And bearing, neath their mantles, secret glaives.
They then, the wall o'erleapt, surprise and slay
The Roman watch ; without or noise or ruth !
And, sith, he finds her, which was his loved wife.
But, ah, with deadness, now, she him receives !
Tears hang, in her pure eyes, as icicles.
Is empty of joy, her faithful breast, henceforth.
She, with a whispered wailing, him reveals,
The rapine of her beauty. Their young son,
Wrestling to save her, Romans' thrice-cursed captain,

Caused, to be scourged with rods. The noble child,
Yester, in anguish of his soul, is dead.
Low, in dark prison-vault, he murdered lies.
The ravisher's pavilion, her white hand,
Sad, shows, from thence unfar, in clear moonlight.
Then, thrice, she adjures him, by Gauls' deathless gods!
Draw now his glaive, and slay her wrongéd flesh,
Were but in reverence of her father's house;
Whence was she, issued to him, a clean maid.
Ah, when in greenwood and uncertain place,
They dwelled together, more that goodly child
Was, to them both, than land and lordship lost.
How, sleep the gods! Why heard they not the voice,
Of that true wife? Creeps nightmare, in his blood!
Sudden, snatcht her white hand skean of his glaive;
She, ah, smote herself, riving her constant breast!
So whispered, faint; I, once more, may thee kiss!
He turned; and, groaning, pluckt the crude steel forth!
He lulled the dying, in his arms, and oft
Vowed Divicos last destruction of proud Romans.
He, as beside his mind, kissed her pale lips:
He kissed a corse; for she is, now, a corse!

Then, as one mad, laid from him her warm flesh,
He, with his mantle, covered his dead spouse.
So went forth, with fell heart, stout Divicos.
Lynx-like creeps he : the lecher's curtain draws !
On purple sleeps, lo, Rome's foul magistrate !
By whom, is dead and outraged his loved wife ;
His crime hath made them, ever, childless both !
Dim burns Etruscan lamp. Him seems, in dream
Of lust, this lies, and wine. Him Divicos caught,
By the throat-bole, anon ; and slew with knife,
Whereby his innocent died, that impious !
And sunk, to hell, his ever-damned ghost.
Hackt the tent's cords, they course through Romans' camp ;
Firing, with embers of his smouldering hearth,
Then, halm-thatcht cabans of, now slumbering, soldiers.
Returned, soon, with new thought, sad Divicos,
He took, upon his shoulders, his wife's corse.
And that young warrior, made, of Roman targe,
Breastwork ; before him, goeth, with long drawn glaive.
So, ere yet day, they wan forth, to green wood.
There, Divicos, mourning, digged his dead wife's grave ;
Whence, parting, he passed Rhine, to freeborn Almains.

To hear that noble Gaul, flock press of Britons.

He cries then, Brothers, of this soil of Brennus!
Swear, by yond august temple of the Sun,
This foster-soil, which gave your sires Gaul's gods,
Defend, from the base servitude to Romans!
When ye, in Britain, have repulsed Rome's legions;
Your, brethren, in Main Gaul, will slay all Romans.
Then warlike nations, that beyond Rhine dwell,
Shall risen with us, in arms, send their young swarms.
Divicos looked forth! and a foreseeing spirit,
(Which shines, oftwhiles, in men's eyes toward their deaths;)
Him shows! and Divicos spake, with hollow voice;
How main and island Gauls' new mingled armies,
Leading them Brennid dukes, like the war-gods;
And, with them, Heremod's Almains, mighty Alps,
Should pass, again, to purge the world of Rome!
From fields, beyond, their scornful tread should march;
Fields where lie legions, by them, battle-slain.

In pledge whereof, men of this soil of Brennus,
Trample now underfoot, these jowls of Romans.
He said; and, with loud battle-cry; he hurled
Them, from his saddle-bow, down-forth! on green grass:
Which Britons, with loud mocking chant, receiving,
Spurn with swift feet, thick reeling multitude!
But he, on whom come fury of Gauls' war-gods,
The scaly bronze pluckt, from his hardy breast,
Whereas shine glorious scars, as one possessed,
Now direful, looks, with eyeballs staring, strange:
Hark, then, with swelling voice, he vows his blood!
To Island Britain's high safe-guarding gods:
With prayer, they smite thus Roman enemies!
This said, drawn Divicos skean of his broad glaive,
(Shines in the sun!) he it thrust, ah, in his bowels.
And fell that hero, from his tall horse, forth.
He wallows, dying, on the trampled grass;
To green mound's foot! so gave, with groan, the ghost.
Gaze-on, fast thronging Britons, all amazed!
Come eve, they, three times, march, round his cold corse;
Which priests, then, helmed and hauberked, as he is,
Bury, in what place he fell, unwashed the blood;

For sacred is his body : and the sun's druids,
Did, sithence, loose forth Divicos' tall war-steed,
To pasture, aye, in precinct of the god.
But what shall be of his twelve captive Romans ?
Is sentence of Cunobelin, They contend,
Shall, with like number of lot-chosen Britons.
Whereby might them foreshow sky-dwelling gods,
The fortune of the war, toward, with Romans.
Next noon, proclaimed, with great voice, a king's-herald ;
Whoso would him adventure, gainst those Romans,
In battle, to contend, before the gods,
To death ; that, from his kindred, he stand forth !
Lo, an hundred then advance them, in the plain !
Young men, of stature, with their arms. Lead druids,
Before the people, one Erm in, by the hand ;
Whose eyeballs seared had lightning's sacred flame :
Howbeit, wont, with oft visions, his dim being
Illumine Belin ; and here, daily, he hath
His sustenance, with the priests of the sun-god.
That purblind dreamed, this night-time ; Must last ruin
Begin, even at his hands, of all blue Britons !
Wherefore, whilst dark, to sense of other wights ;

He stole him forth ; and groped to priests' grave-place,
League's way, in the wide plain. There, laid him down,
He prayed that god, to take his weary life.
But, at his druid's word, hath sent Cunobelin ;
And Erm was fetched, again, in the king's chariot.
  Oft as this, (who goes knocking, with his staff,)
Then stays : he it, raught forth ; to some young man,
    toucht !
And should, mongst these, be cast the battle-lots.
Helm-clad, the captives shall, as legionaries,
And harnessed, fight ; bearing their Roman arms.

  Declining, now, the sun, to afternoon ;
Before the tribes, which sit on the green mounds,
Six Romans, lo, opposed to six tall Britons !
Each Briton armed, in guise of his own tribe.
Lifting their eyes, towards Belin and the gods,
Loud pray the island people, with one voice,
Give victory, unto their young men warriors ! Heralds
First blowing horns of bronze, of a grave note,
Proclaim, aloud, Cunobelin's ordinance.
  Being measured lists, with line and hazel-rods,
Cunobelin gave the sign. Then, of both parts,
Outleap those champions, to the battle-dance :
Britons and Romans, shouting, each, their gods !

Lo, under Briton's glaive, first, falls some Roman.
Is pierced a Briton, then, of Roman javelin ;
He, dying, on his knees, stays on his hand.
Yet falls a Roman. Failed, then, Britons' hearts ;
For he, who foremost of the island part,
Grief of all eyes, is smitten down, to death !
As numbed, they wait, on judgment of their gods.
Druids some signs, in this, of birds, beholding,
Speak to Cunobelin. Pious the Land's Ward,
Beckons, with his high hand ! His heralds, then,
Their sceptres interposing, part the champions.
Those, leaning on their weapons, blow and sweat !
But when, not lawful were, read Belin's druids,
Renew the battle, in a dying sun ;
Chanting loud funeral lays, from the green mounds ;
In worship of their dead, the folk descended.

Dawing new morn, on plain of the day's god,
Measure new lists the heralds, oak-leaf crowned,
And that, by new-made grave of Gaulish Divicos.
Nine young men stand, lo, Britons of stout looks,
Gainst nine that rest of Roman harnessed soldiers.
Then silence made ; warlord Cunobelin,
Through his interpreter, (an exile from Gaul,)
Those Romans bade, require what grace they will,

Towards their deaths. Promised the sire, moreover,
Who should 'scape with his life, might freely pass
O'er, to the Continent, in some Gaulish ship,
With safeguard and with gifts. Naught, of their enemies,
Ask Roman soldiers; but it were, to taste
Some little meat. Eating, each exhorts other;
Quit them like Romans! One, who best could speak,
Quoth, Fear we not this nation's barbare face;
Nor the dread shout of hostile multitude.
Bellona and mighty Mars, guardians of Rome,
And divine Julius; (if to any gods,
May come our prayer, from this far island coast,)
Favour our arms. In vertue and martial skill,
We our foes, and Roman fortitude, excell.
Fellows, though few, yet enranged, foot to foot,
And helm to helm, with shout, first rushing on,
Hurl we our darts: then, take we to our glaives.
Lo, long-haired, naked striplings, without harness!
That, woad-stained now shall fight, gainst plate-clad soldiers:
As poplars should contend, with stedfast oaks.

Britons, above, sit on the green grave-mounds,
In rows, around. Cunobelin gave, then, sign,
Smiting his hands, together! On both parts,
Who fight, with dreadful counter-yells, outrush!
Those, which in ordinance are of legionaries,
Erst thrill, with darts, the Britons' bulls'-hide shields,
Distempered of the rain. Ah, fallen four Britons!
There fall three, with them, slain, of plate-clad Romans!
And leans one on his targe, is hurt to death.
Lifted, lo, hand, to slay him, with broad glaive!
But, in that moment, (a vast thunder roars!)
Sky-rending Taran, then, a quivering lightning,
Athwart men's eyelids, darted to the ground.
At druids' new cry, his royal hand, uplifted
The white-locked sire. Their sceptre-rods cast heralds,
As yester, then, betwixt that strife of champions.
Quoth Belin's priest, That god, whose glaive the lightning,
Is angry in heaven; and wills this battle cease.
On him, who reels, of Romans, with death's wound,
(As sacred to the gods of underworld,)
A mad priest seizing, slays, with altar-knife.
Druids make divination, by his fall!

Priests bury, where they fell, the Romans slain,
Laid, on their breasts, great stones; lest they should rise,
To trouble Britain. Lay, in chambered mound,
A mourning people, without wailing cries,
(Old royal tomb,) their woad-stained glorious dead.
Wreathed collars gives Cunobelin, of red gold,
To those five Briton champions, which survive:
Gives freedom, to that remnant of proud Romans;
Gold rings and money coined, wealth of Isle Britain.
And, for an angry nation them enclose;
(Till found were mean, to save them to mainland;)
The king, lest any slay them, gives them guard.

When now all kings, to morrow's sacrifice;
(Which daily is slain, at the great temple-stone,)
Are come; Cunobelin, that both sickness hath,
And heavy age; and may, no longer, bear
The sovereignty; his belt-of-strength deposed,
(That glittering girdle royal, of burned gold:
Which ensign is, since days of Cassiobellan,
Of who warlord, o'er all tribes of South Britain,)
In ancient Mogont's hands; priest, purple-stoled,
Midst choir of leaf-crowned druids, of the sun-god;
That, in his holy temple, dance and chant.

Received it, reverent, goeth, lo, Mogont forth,
Before them all, with solemn dancing foot;
Through the great temple's midst, till come to place,
Where fire, (which fell from heaven; the sacred hearth,)
Burns. He, then, (three times, turned to West, from East,)
Lays, on sun's altar-stone, that golden belt!
Whose chariot-wheels shine, in this morning sun?
Caratacus; he, it is, so swiftly arrives!
Yet pale the prince, from sickness nigh to death.
With whom stands riding, in white glittering war-cart,
With antique targe, old Cantion Dumnoveros.
And when, at porch of Belin's mighty house,
Those light, all Britons, standing round, applaud!
Devout, then, in wheel-temple, of the sun,
All enter; where, when Dumnoveros hears,
(Who next, in Samoth's house is, to Cunobelin,)
In reverend age; how he, mongst kings, deposed
That golden belt, ensign of the Land's Ward;
He it shining lifts, and girds, with loud accord,
Of all their throats! the loins of Togodumnos.
And Togodumnos feels, in him, infused,
New strength and vertue of his saviour gods.
To heaven, shout Britons; when, with pomp of druids,

Kings bring him forth, to morning parliament ;
That shot-down sunny beam, from covert skies,
See rest, mongst lords and druids, on Togodumnos !

Was marked Segontorix wry away his face ;
And how he paled, in temple of the god !
Being changed to gall, his ruddy countenance,
When girded lord-of-war was Togodumnos ;
And he, with mantle, covered his stern face.
Nor went he, thence, among the kings, to sit ;
But drew him to his tent, apart ; where blaming
The heavens, that any were, before his worth,
Preferred, that lord did wallow on the grass.
There no man durst, then, to the Guledig, call ;
Till his strong passion, for he noble was,
Towards eve, subdued ; the Belges' sire uprose,
Did on his raiment royal, and went forth :
So came to that broad oak, whose leafy arms,
Shelter the kings, where they assembled sup.
All yield room, to this nephew of old Commius,
That he might sit down, in the highest place,
Twixt Togodumnos and Caratacus.
Sith, after supper, when is poured-out mead ;
Lifting his right hand, he, with manly voice,
Sware fealty, unto new warlord Togodumnos.

Failed the old sire, and fainted, in the night;
But he revived. Come morrow; king Cunobelin,
His servants, to the god's great temple's porch,
Bear, where, before South Britons, lords and druids,
Holds Togodumnos, morning parliament.
All hearken, the old king of warriors speaks!
Britons, Cunobelin, by his fathers' gods!
(Long warfare he foreshows, after his death,)
Exhorts to concord all, in war with Rome:
Else must, as parted streams, they lose their strength
He reads, (king most expert, in Britons' wars,)
Not fight with Romans, in an open field;
But rather waste, before their legions' march;
Them daily outwear, with ambushes, and cut-off
Their hindward, with oft onsets of swift chariots.
And be, (which from his fathers, he received,)
They ware to fight, when setting is day's sun;
Nor seek join battle, in a waning moon.
Let every night be full of new alarms!
Because might Britons' weapons, forged of bronze
Uneath the Romans' tempered hauberks pierce,
Counsels the sire, send, wide, for cunning smiths;
To beat, of tempered iron, glaives, heads of spears.
Then risen Duneda, (for his kingly looks,
Like some war-god,) mongst Britons' lords and druids;

Reads, that, of gold and silver, were there made
Collection; namely, to hire wrights and smiths.
This said; he let fall his own royal weed,
On the green herb; and cast, in it, displayed,
Erst, Duffreynt's king, his red gold shining bracelets,
Like dragons long enrolled; and his broad brooch,
Like golden sun, within a silver wheel.
Lords, after him and kings, cast, with large hand,
Collars and bracelets, of burned gold, and rings.
Confer the warlike Britons, also, bronze,
And silver. Then, that war-gift take up druids;
And lay, lo, on the altar of their god.
Parted, at afternoon, the sire Cunobelin;
Whom all bring forth, to dry-hilled Sorbiodunum,[1]
Then, kings and chief estates. Tarry yet Britons,
To make the Sun's great sacrifice of steeds.

The second day; was noised, in Belin's plain,
Deceased, in his home journey, king Cunobelin.
Died weary, in his long wayfare, the hoar sire,
(To whom not given was, of his island-gods,
To lead blue Britons, in their Roman war!)
And lapped in hairy hide, of a black steer.

[1] Sarum.

(They sacrificed unto gods of underworld,)
His faithful servants now, to Verulam, bear ;
With loud and long lament, the royal corse.
Return the royal sons, on fleetest steeds,
Caradoc and, king now, warlord Togodumnos.
But when that funeral pomp, to Verulam gates,
Arrives ; forbid, were burned the warlord dead,
His people's druids : lest mount the sire's great spirit,
From earth, unmindful of invading legions !
They bury will Cunobelin, with his spear ;
Seated on royal throne, in vaulted walls ;
His swift team, by him, and a royal chariot.
Nor made should funeral games be, for Cunobelin,
Time of the Roman war : which ended, bards
With loud lays, should contend, to praise the sire.

Tombed the great warlord Catuvelaunian king,
Before the towered high gate of Verulamion,
Mongst concourse of South Britons' lords and druids;
Standing Cunobelin's sons, at the grave-mound,
Caradoc, and, (warlord,) martial Togodumnos;
Joined their right hands, the kingdom they divide,
Betwixt them, as disposed their sire, before ;
Whereof bare record Verulam's chief estates.
Shall Togodumnos, rule, o'er Catuvelaunians ;

Whose city is this great Verulam, upon Ver,
The royal tribe. East from whose marches, gave
Old Trinobantine soil, with Camulodunum,
(The conquered march and dune of Eppilos,)
Cunobelin, to his son Caratacus.
Shall be that flood their border, which runs down,
To Thames, by London hythe. And heir is Embla,
Of Cantion, after Dumnoveros' death.
In the king's hall, all drink, then, funeral mead.
But come Duneda and kings, from the Sun's plain;
To Togodumnos, who now lord in Verulam:
Reads Duffreynt's king; were published that war-ban,
Which was in days of antique Cassiobellan;
Since must be, to the death, this war with Rome:
When war-flame, on the beacon hills, is seen,
Rise valiant youth! repair, with arms and victual,
Unto your commotes' lords. What man is, then,
Last to arrive, shall be an hilding named;
And may, before his people, be put to death!
These things determined, part Caratacus,
And gentle Embla; with great train and honour:
Albe, in mourning stole, for the king's death.
With pomp they ride of horse, and shining chariots,

Two days, to city on Colne, of Camulus.
There they arriving, the town's magistrates,
And joyful citizens, greet them, at the gates;
Whence, twixt ranged throngs, they bring king Caradoc, forth,
To mead-hall; where prepared is royal feast.

King Caradoc finds, with much disorder, filled
His court, wherein dwelled, lately, Red Adminius:
And this last night-time, (an East wind them wafted,)
Fifteen long stranger war-keels were come in;
Are men of uncouth speech and battle-gods,
And Almaigne guise, who sail, upon their boards;
That warped, now, cold-beaked anchors, in this hythe!
And some on Woden, some on Thunor, call.
On their most shields, is pictured a white horse:
A raven is their ensign, in the wars.
The men are pirates, saling in long keels,
With high-necked dragon stems and gilded ensigns;
Whose crated bulwarks, dekt, with hard bulls'-hide,
Are shingled all with shields. Their wadmel sails,
Loost-out, to dry, hang, flagging, in the wind.
In every nimble keel, sail fifty thanes;
And fifty strong boats'-carles row, on the banks;
That draw long sinewed oars of the light pine.

And limned, with blue, each warrior's face is seen.
Some wear ring-kirtles, over long frieze coats;
And each one girds broad leathern belt, wherein
Shines skean or twibill. In the tawny locks,
Of many, (upbound for fence,) are broad iron rings.
Those boast them ploughmen, in their boisterous lays,
Of the sea's field; whose fallow long wave-rows,
Their balks and furlongs; wherein they, to Ran,
Wont tithing cast, of all their gotten preys;
Which they have ravished, on some enemy-coast:
Whence those, with braying song, of their rude throats,
Which seem contend with the hourse tempest's voice,
Row forth, with speedy oars. If any pirate,
Break troth of his shiplord: in the next haven,
Bound to an anchor, men him warp from board!
Those, turned, (in far North Coast,) to creeky shores,
When the leaf falls, drawn-up their long row-ships;
Sit, in the lords' high halls, at winter hearths,
Drunken of ale; and chant their warlike gods.
Nor any are, in the world, than these, more valorous,
Found; that none other the esteem of life,
Than, chosen of Woden, fall in furious fight.
Lords of those pirate keels go, proudly, afoot;
Leaning, in stranger land, on their war-spears:
As each soil were, like a sea-waves so wide,

Their own, where they arrive. The great tower-gate
They entered, of this city of Camulus,
Come on, with people's concourse, to king's hall.
Men are they of violent looks, that only trust,
(Fearing none gods,) in their own arms and force!
These thrust on, mainly, unto higher place;
And, loud, for the sweet mead, gin call and ale;
And they, uneath, had hailed king Caradoc!
Who looks, on the strange warriors, from high stall.
Howbe, they, in Northman speech, in Caradoc's hall,
Each other greet; (as who reck smally of Britons!)
Saying, Cóme-hale, Sit-hale, on this bench or stool;
Drink-hale! This Woden's cup, for Victory;
The next to Niord, and Frey; for a good year:
For young men, which have, as the king commanded,
Set meat before them, bear now ale and mead.
Whiles those eat bread and chines of larded boar;
And drink out deep-mouthed horns of *curmi* and mead;
King Caradoc sent, for an interpreter.
But when that sea-folk have, at length, enough;
Upspake one of those warmen, of North Strand,
(Interpreting, now, some ship-swain of Manannan,)

Which seems, by his bright arms and lofty looks,
Should be their king, (and BLOODAXE his bold name ;)
What mean the lords of Bret-land,[1] these last days ;
Sending their message, by the Red-mare ship,
To call, from far East-Way, the pirates forth,
So hastily, in arms ; as gainst some Romish fleet ?
Shall Cæsar sail to Britain's rime-white cliffs !

Kings of Bret-land, in plough-time, have them called,
From far-off wicks, long have they rowed and sailed :
Whence their boat-carles, for certain weight of bronze,
Look ; and their thanes require, for the king's sake.
Else his ship-folk, returning home, as scorned,
Might, on some Bret-land coast, light, with armed hand ;
Which hurt were to the king ! he quoth, whereat,
Laught, a loud laughter, their untuned hoarse throats !
Whose insolent eyes, seem Britons to devour,
Already ! Wherefore Colne's stout citizens
Watch, day and night, with secret guard of spears,
To keep the river-gate, upon their walls.

Swells the great heart of noble Caradoc ;
And hardly, his rising wrath, the king repressed,
With righteous thought, that sacred are all guests.
Cometh in then Embla : and the gentle queen,

[1] Britain.

Unto all commendeth patience, with sweet looks.
Sith, to each steersman, giveth, herself, the queen,
A piece of gold ; whereon pourtrayed, is seen
The face and battle-chariot of Cunobelin.
Moreo'er, when such their custom and land's-wont,
She understood ; twixt her two gracious palms,
She bears, lo, a mighty horn in Camulus' hall,
Of royal mead, to chief ones of the ships.
Queen Embla seemed then radiance of the sun !
The hearts relent, as wax, of those stout champions,
Beholding her, beneath their ringed-iron harness :
And falls, like o'erpassed storm, their truculent mood.
Who then is there, not sayeth, in secret breast,
Fair lady, all-hail ! Though gnaws, for ire, his lips,
(Whose heart like spended bow,) Caratacus ;
He gives an ox, out of the royal stalls,
Unto every keel, that might those, rowing forth,
To sea, make feast : and poise, to every rower,
Of bronze. To every lord of a longship,
A silver cup ; and raiment for each wight.
The Almains drink then covenant, and depart ;
Covenant, that they the narrow-seas should watch.
Yet heard is word, of other Almain ships ;
Come likewise in, under the cold clay-cliffs,
By Branodunum, of Icenic coast.

Lord, warden of that march, them, Hiradoc hath
Received. The strangers, drawn-up their long yawls;
In booths, nigh-hand, of boughs, lodge, on heath side.
And Hiradoc some to Verulam sends, in chariots;
To war-king, great Bretwalda,[1] Togodumnos.
  Mongst those, came renowned THOROLF, from
    Elbe's mouth,
Nephew of Arthemail, with his blue-winged ships;
Whose sire now rules, o'er mingled Ambones.
Come Chaucan, with him, and Cheruscan earls,
Of his great kindred, that descends from Brennus:
Each, with armed bands, in many long row-keels.
To Britain hath, outsailing, Thorolf sworn,
A Roman captain slay, on Brennus' tomb!
  Nephew of Brennus, Thorolf is, in force,
As a wild bull. Might this, is told, a wain,
Pluck back gainst an ox-team. Wolf leapt on Thorolf,
In his first strength: but like hill-sheep, him caught,
The hero-child, by his long neck-hairs, and strangled!
A bear, another while, in swart pine forest,
Whose latticed boughs, all day, dim twilight made,
With Thorolf met; whence none returning was.
Bearing no weapon, he, with snatcht wild stone,
Choked the brute's gorge; that, erewhile, had slain men;

[1] All Britons' ruler.

And, on him, gaping, rose, with dreadful claws.
Nor yet were given, to Thorolf, manly arms.
What day his sire, king Wittig, armed his hands,
With spear and shield, before the folk, and bade
Do valiantly; Thorolf went out from the feast,
Him following all the men, of his young age:
And ere they again, at morrow's break, ate bread;
That ethling smote the pirates of the Elbe;
Which, longtime, had vext Wittig's warlike march.
And grows, each day, his heart, to emulate,
Of his great sires, the high heroic worth.
Lie stooping, on the wind, now nigh the land,
His thirteen keels: and well are they purveyed,
With men and corn. Who sit, within their boards,
Chant, as they sail, of Heremod and great Brennus!
Is also told, how, erewhile, Sœxmund named
Was Thorolf; till came Hild in, to Elbe-haven,
(Hild, Elsing;) and was Hild an ancient friend
Of Wittig's father, lord of East-sea ships.
Mishapped, fell, one day, Sœxmund yet a child,
Down in Elbe's tideway, from the stranger's poop,
Whereon he played. Was Hild's hand, Sœxmund snatcht;
Fast-swimming, (leapt after him, then,) from drowning death!

Wherefore, lap-seated the saved royal babe ;
Went in, sith, to king's hall ; of Wittig, asked,
The Elsing, meed ; that his saved little son ;
He might again, as second father, name :
Which, to that shiplord, also, grateful, granted
The king and the child's mother. Hild, which hath
No son, after his sires, then, called the babe,
THOROLF ; (which Thunor's wolf sounds to West Almains :)
That, by him, to a late world, their renown
Might come ; and the wise Veleda had foretold,
Of glorious Woden-life, for Wittig's son !

Dwelled, at king Wittig's court, had Gaulish Divicos ;
Where came, from time to time, the bard Carvilios ;
And Thorolf's high heart stirred, against the Romans.
Moreo'er, by high divining art of druids,
Forespake that bard, dark admirable things,
To the young prince ; and more than all this was !
That, spirit divine of antique Heremod,
Should take, again, flesh, in great Brennus' house :
Whence his great mood, enflamed with godlike heat,
Is. Then, appeared, in Britain's isle, he hears,
New-bodied spirits of Belinus and great Brennus ;

(Belin in council, Brennus in proud arms!)
His father, Wittig, licensed him to sail ;
In those self keels he, from the pirates, wan :
Which known, flockt flower of warlike youth, to Thorolf.
Fall their full sails, behold, now, in wide road :
They outwarp anchors. Thorolf, with few lords,
Descends in barge : so rows, to land of Brennus.
He leapt, in sounding arms, to shore ; and stood,
Silent : and spread the ethling his armed hands,
To battle-gods, of Brennus, that burned Rome.
So marched he, to the gate of Branodunum ;
And seemed himself an army. Of Hiradoc ;
Who him beholds, with stupor, in his hall !
He asks a boon ; him speed to Verulamion ;
To his high kin, the sons of king Cunobelin.
Consents stout Hiradoc : and when his strange guests,
From overseas, have eaten, and drunk mead ;
He, in scythe-cart, lo, the young illustrious Almain
Conveys ; and erst towards city of Camulus.
Standing, by Hiradoc, in the rushing chariot ;
Who rules, with voice, and rein his teaméd steeds,
Cheruscan Thorolf passeth that tall Briton
In his heroic stature : from whose neck,
Hangs hammer, of fine gold, of Thunor god,

O'ergraven with sacred runes. With strong war-steeds,
They come, the third day's eve, to Camulodunum.
With honour, him, Queen Embla, there, receives:
Of whom, they hear, returned, to Verulam;
(Where sit now Briton kings, in parliament;
Consulting, for the safety of the Isle;)
King Caradoc, unto warlord Togodumnos.
They mount anew. Then early, at second morrow,
At Verulam's royal court, those lords arrive.

Passed the dune-gates, duke Hiradoc draws, now, reins,
Before that great new mead-hall of Cunobelin.
Receives a royal hind their smoking steeds;
And leads to stall. They go in, by wide porch:
And hark! one toucht, midst a new silence made,
An harp's shrill strings. They hear a vates' voice:
The harp, the warlike voice of bard Carvilios!
They, next the doorway, stand; where noble Thorolf,
Unto a pillar leaned, gan much admire
The countenance of those germain kings, which sit,
In the high seat; young men, like to twin gods:
Aye, and some here sit, whom he had seen in Almaigne,
(With ship-king Divicos,) round these royal walls!
Nor, yet, heard Thorolf tell, of Divicos' death.

That bard, now, turned, to mourning, his stern note;
Records dead Divicos, to the warlike Britons.
Then darkened is the Almaigne hero's mood;
For he, in part, perceives the Gaulish speech:
Nor marvels, gazing on their warlike looks,
In hall, assembled; that the arms of Brennus,
Had vanquished and burned Rome. Sit men, like kings,
On polisht stools, round these high timbered walls.
Whilst yet he muses, paused Carvilios.
Then made forth Thorolf, powdered as he was,
With dust of running wheels; and Hiradoc.
How turn, on him to gaze, the Britons' press!
Them seems, some war-god, entered, in man's guise.
Hail Hiradoc! quoth Cunobelin's royal sons.
And he; Illustrious Catuvelaunian kings,
Behold, renowned prince Thorolf, Wittig's son;
Who rules, o'er Ambones, beyond the Rhine.
He, nephew of Brennus, Fridia and Heremod,
Obedient to a dream, hath sailed to Britain;
To fight, with us, gainst Rome's invading legions:
And brings, in aid, two thousand Almain warriors.

His long row-keels, ride under my dune cliff.
Answered Cunobelin's sons, In happy hour!
With theirs, sounds loud commingled, people's voice;
In great mead-hall of royal Verulamion!
Uprose those princes, germains, from high stall:
To him, descended; they take, both, his hands;
He kisseth them, both, on their two cheeks, again.
And they, with kiss, him lead, and kinsman name;
Among the kings, to sit, betwixt them both:
And he them asks, of brotherhood and bond;
As Heremod, yore, with Belinus and Brennus.
Sith Thorolf greets the bard Carvilios.

Whilst the tribes' kings prepare, in all South-march,
To warfare; tribes that dwell in far North Britain,
Heard tiding of great Rome's invading threat.
Mongst blue Brigantes, erst, then sire Volisios,
That coast's-ward, sending, by swift messengers, forth,
Green boughs, which druids have pluckt, in sacred groves,
Of holy oaks, assembles parliament,
Of neighbour lords; to treat, concerning aid,
Which they Cunobelin, warlord of South Britain,
Mote send; for, not yet, heard they the sire's death.

Princes of warlike tribes sit with Volisios,
In hallowed plot, ringed round, of great pight stones;
To choose, among them, one, by sacred lot,
To captain their great warfare, from the North.
Behold this lot is fallen, on king VELAUNOS,
Of Coritavian nation. In his name,
Swear then all kings, chief magistrates and high druids.

Carvilios, fared from royal Verulamion,
With steeds and war-cart, gift of dead Cunobelin;
(Whom follow noble youth and bards, in chariots,)
From dune to dune, in halls of princes chants;
Calling the island nations, rise, in arms!
But, sith, he hastily is went, unto North parts.
Behold Carvilios, under a green hill,
His bridle draws; where, now, tall long-haired lords,
Kings of the North, consult, in parliament.
The bard approached, to length of a stonecast,
On shining war-wheels, touched then Gaulish harp,
That hangs down from his nape, by silver lace;
Whose shrill wires, like to sharp shafts, pierce men's hearts:
Whereafter he, his far-resounding voice,
(Which bellows-back, from cliffs, above!) sent forth.

Fight, Britain's sons, which burned great Rome, with Brennus,
Not loosely arrayed! Is not, of one small stone,
Scattered much sand? of many wolves, is rent;
When have those knit together their small force,
The great ureox, which mightiest of all beasts.
When ye march armed, go up, with shielded breasts,
To battle; having, only, fear, towards death,
Not, by proud deeds, to merit a new life!
This said, drave forth that vates, in shrill chariot;
He would not dwell, what though all cry, Carvilios!
For straitened, in this journey, is his breast·
To come to Mona's holy oracle.
In Mona arrived, the noble bard all gifts
Uphangs, which he received, in the god's porch;
His arms, also, and gold-bright Gaulish harness.
Purged then, with certain herbs, Carvilios sleeps,
Upon the splayed hide of his sacrifice;
One of those steeds, he vowed, which drew his chariot.
That night he sees, in dream, strange images,
Of diverse beasts, which drive, tumultuous,

In the sea-flood, to sweet sound of his harp,
From far West part, whereo'er lies land of Erinn.
His dream interpret thus, divining druids ;
After the several names, of birds and beasts ;
Be those Cruithni, pictured tribes of Erinn.
But when Carvilios set his face, to pass,
The gulf, they warn his hardy enterprise ;
Painting the salvage customs of the isle,
And sudden tempests of Vergivian seas !
Fame is, that mothers wont, their babes, in Erinn,
To feed, of spear-point, which hath slain a man.
Warriors, in battle, lap their enemies' gore.
Nor those know use of bread, nor to sow grain :
Wild worts are their most sustenance and raw flesh.
And such should hap, find strangers, on their coast,
Cast, shipwrecked ; unto Cromm, (black idol-stone,)
Their custom is, them bind, for sacrifice,
To die, when the day's god ! But, all that sun,
Their children shoot, at them, with shafts and darts.
Yet, for all this, faints not Carvilios' heart,
In his stern breast ; but, at the vates' word,
Weaving frail wattles, his disciples made
A bark ; and it o'erdight, with hides of steeds ;
That to blue Noden, lord of this sea-deep,

And Mona's god, Carvilios offered up.
And were those twain ; for all the rest went back.
They put from shore ; and loosing soon the land,
Did set, for sail, the bard's blue broidered weed,
With silver stars : and row their palms, for oars.
They meat, nor drink, bear, on this perilous voyage.
But magic hymn Carvilios loud intones,
To lay, to sleep, the spirits of all wild winds ;
Save that from Britain's land, which softly blows.
On them, falls golden slumber, from the gods.
And were they three, which sleep, the little mast,
Around ; whereon there hangs Carvilios' harp :
On whose shrill wires, low-warbeling, plays the wind.
And flocking sea-mews, with their hoar-blue wings,
Do waft the skiff ; and guide their beaks to land.
And was the after-morrow of that day,
When they put forth, that, at Belinda's mouth,
Where stands Iberion's temple, giant son,
Of Belin sun-god, slide the ebbing waves,
Back, from their keel, which strands. But they, a-land ;
Lifting, as from long dream, their heavy eyes,
Behold go sheep-flocks, trooping, on green bent ;
And grassy hill, which people's multitude,
Stand round ; as did those hear some dooms of druids.
They foot set forth, then, on those pebble brinks ;

And bear their bark, betwixt them, up, on strand :
But, in that, rise up, yelling, shock-haired wights,
Horrid of aspect ; and that levelled spears,
Do gainst them shake, which in their violent hands.
And those are naked, save that iron hoops,
Their middles gird. They cry, with hideous throat,
Out on them ; and whilst those, for dread, not speak,
With writhen withies, knit, behind their backs,
Their wrists ; and gin towards that doom-hill, them
hale !

Howbe, repressed, through reverence of his looks,
Like to one of the gods, they loosed Carvilios.
But he, despised their cries and salvage mood ;
Took in his hand, that stilled their brutish minds,
His ivory harp of Gaul, of heavenly sound ;
And to doom-seat, he leads them, himself, forth.
Where, lo, long yellow-haired, like flower of broom,
That people's king sits, upright, on wild stone ;
Unto whose middle raught, (which girded is,
With sheen large hoop of gold,) his royal beard :
His cheek as any fox-glove red. Stand brehons
And lords, their kings around ; and the land's druids.
Mongst whom, seen, women-brehons, in long stoles,
Of shining line ; and with much yellow lawn,
Wounden their long hair-locks. A brehon-wife

Quoth, Suppliants of the god, I see, approach!
And do thou them, I read, O king, none hurt.
Who bring the bards, rude keepers of that strand,
Spake, Lord, these strangers, in their little bark,
We found, now, yonder, tide-cast on your coast.
That king asks counsel of his priests; and, erst,
Of one Maelunni, (Servant-of-the-Bronze,
A glaive this nation worship, as a god :)
Wight strangely adorned. Like divinister, is
His chamfered forehead, with quaint humlocks, bound;
His collar, rings and bracelets be pierced stones;
And, from his iron belt, hang, lo, flint knife-stones.
And only is of the wildness of earth's ground,
This druid's meat, (suppled with flame, and seethed,
Somewhiles, with milk,) lean worts, of field and wood,
Morel, wake-robin, earth-nuts, digged by night;
Heath-berries, black and blue; in winter, mast
And acorns parched; and such like wretchedness,
Wherein scant nourishment. But burns, in his breast,
An high discerning spirit of Erinn's gods.
Quoth Maelunni, Come these men, gods' guests;
We may them do none hurt. Then Palador spake,

For thus the king, king of Ivernis old,
Is named. Them loose! For theirs, if any smite
Them, be his life. But thou, which seemest some bard,
And bearest so constant noble countenance,
Thy kindred read; and wherefore thy frail voyage:
But look, and thou not lie before the gods.
Thus spake the king, and called to him up one,
Can Britons' speech declare, and the Gauls' tongue.
Answered, with melody of the bards, Carvilios;
And sware, by Palador the king's high right hand,
And by the Dagda, that they, suppliants, sailed,
To this, Sun's, isle, from Mona's sacred shore.
So took his harp, with ivory of the whale's tooth,
Inlaid: and quoth Carvilios, how, from Gaul,
Beyond the Ictian sea, he fared to Britain;
Calling all kings, to venge him of strange nation;
Men name them Romans, which the world oppress.
Those entered Gaul, with armies, there, have slain
The people; and seized the land their heritage.

And those prepare them, soon, to invade
Britain;
Which won, their bridge should be to enter
Erinn;
That Romans name the Less or Second Britain.
So ceased his chant; and troubled was their mood.
Sith, in dark speech, Carvilios hymn unfolds,
Of the day-god, known only to few druids:
How, sprung of womb of the Eternal Night;
Whence, daily, he, highest new-born god,
upmounts,
Shaking his amber locks, and breathes sweet
breath,
O'er plains of the low world. The virgin
hours,
Before him, tracing, on their silver feet,
Open wide gates of heaven, where he doth pass.
In their cloud-chariots, wont, against him,
ride,
Then envious spirits of the misty murk.
But when, from his hot looks, those flee dis-
persed,
Rejoice again, all dwellers in the earth.
On heaven's steep hill, ascends the glorious
path,

Of Belin's steeds. High-riding, the sun-god,
The sounds, melodious, falling from his harp,
Recomfort the two worlds, of men and gods.
O'er heaven's wide-shining bent, thou, all day, speedest,
On fiery wheels, drawn of immortal steeds.
And we, Lord, on thee, call, before all gods,
A lord of flocks; and not to sere our grass.
To midday, come, we pray thee ripe our corn.
And when clothed, angry, in thy purple weed,
Thou battle join'st with the dark welken powers,
Give rain: but us defend, with thy vast targe,
From hail. Come, to the dim world's vaulted brinks,
Where water thy tired steeds, sink thy bright wheels,
Below earth's round, and compass of sea billows:
And seemest thou, then, to die into the night;
Who, daily-born, art eldest of the gods!
But we, on whom, lies spread night's misty murk,
As thou wert dead, then wait, lord, with cold hearts,

And magic chant, beside thine altar-hearths,
Neath stars, thy new uprising, from the East.
Priests of the Sun, from the doom-hill, descended,
With Maelunni ; and they, embrace the man,
And lead to Palador : and caused Palador, king,
That bard of Gaul to sit, at his right hand !
And Palador sent out young men, to his folds,
Among the hills, and to his royal bawns ;[1]
With charge, (for ransom of these strangers' blood,)
Drive hither, a white bull ; and two young rams,
Which should his fellows, also, loose from death.
And turned those victims' heads, on the left hand,
Towards setting sun ; when the day's sacred light
Decays, they shall, to Eserg,[2] sacrifice.
Then uprose Palador ; and from that green hill,
Descended, calls those bards : who now towards
Ivernis old, nigh-builded in green plain,
Their way gan hold. Is that the royal rath,[3]
Fenced with paled banks and dyke ; and there-amidst,
Wide mound, whereon stands builded the lord's house.
Follow loud throngs, with them, king Palador forth.

[1] Bawn, Ir. *babhun*, a cattle-pen.
[2] A god of slaughter.
[3] Lord's fortified dwelling.

The weary strangers eat, at eve, roast flesh,
In the king's hall: but eat the men of Erinn,
The raw, after their guise, and without bread.
Druids, which in the bowels of sacrifices,
Have looked, Carvilios, then, with oak-leaves, crowned.
Took Palador the wreathed gold, from off his neck,
Made, like to serpent, with her little ones;
And decks that vates, who the battle rage,
Chants, after the meat-space. He, sith, appoints,
Noble young men, convey this stranger bard,
Unto all princes' courts, in wide Isle Erinn.

At tiding of the death of king Cunobelin,
The sire MANANNAN was repaired to Britain,
Man half-divine; and whom, had lent the gods,
Unto the world. Dim Mona, of sire Manannan,
Is foster-soil; but now his wont is dwell,
In winter season, at Caer Verulam,
With king Cunobelin, called the Sire of Britain.
There stands, at ford of Ver, by the wayside,
Timbered of lime and stone, his goodly house,
Great-built, as a king's court; for the receipt
Of poor and strangers: and therein he hath,
Uphanged, his golden hauberk, far-renowned;
That tooth of bronze, nor bit of steel, may pierce:

Master of traffic, was his honoured place,
In the king's hall, next to Cunobelin's seat.
And asked the king, in every cause of weight,
His sentence, first, were it of war or peace,
Before the princes of his royal house :
And reverence him all Britons, as a god.
Grey are his eyes, like the steep winter waves,
And like the snow, on Eryr's[1] top, his hairs.
And whilst, the island kings his read observe,
O'er Britons, may prevail none enemies.
His thought, like Belin's wheel, runs through the world.
Far marts he knows and paths, of merchandise,
In many realms ; and nations' tongues and laws ;
And reason of men's hearts, hope, truth and malice ;
And his sea-way, to steer, by the lode-stars.
And in the heavens' vicissitudes, if the sire,
Fell in some peril, or of thieves or robbers,
His wisdom him delivered, with small loss.
To nations, was Manannan wont to trade,
Far off, whose name comes seldom to men's ears ;
To inhuman seats of Scythia, the cold,
Wain-dwellers, and milk-nourished of their mares ;
Where twilight all by day : and to a Land

[1] The same as Sax. Snowdon.

Of women-warriors, drawing crooked bows.
And reached, by sea, he was, to strange Phœnice,
(Cities, mongst palms, which stand, on furthest shore,
Full of their ships, of that blue Midland Deep ;)
For merchandise of purple cloth and glass.
So had Manannan gotten substance, more
Than the most kings; which now, with both his hands,
He enlarges, to this people, as his heirs ;
For hath the sire, and he is old, no sons.
His long-keel, wide-renowned, is the Red-Mare,[1]
Swift as grey running wave, in the North wind ;
Whose flight might match a chariot's course, in shore.
This then, with his bond-servants, he outsends ;
To gather tidings, by the windy seas.

Kings, now, in all South Britain, prepare war.
The glades reek, in fair Kent, of Andred Forest ;
Whose broad shaws sound, with travaillous multitude,
Hewers of oaks. Many, in dripping delves,
Burrow, and see no sun. Are burners, some,
Of coal ; some couch crude ores, of iron, with lime.
And there, on hundred stithies, loudly beat,

[1] P. 154.

By soughing bellows, many famous smiths.
They weld red-hot iron bars, they turn with tongs;
And smite, again! with valiant cunning hands.
Blades of blue steel they labour, long broad-swords,
And cast, in water-troughs, out, heads of spears.
And oft those call on Brigit! whilst they sweat.

Warlord of Britain, royal Togodumnos,
Now, to all neighbour kings and chief estates,
His message sends, by prince Caratacus:
With whom there pomp shall ride, of shining chariots,
And heralds; and the word-wise sire Manannan,
In whose breast breathed is wisdom of a god;
And to whom are men affied, in every coast.
He, with the prince, stands, lo, in royal chariot,
Bearing bright ivory whip, when they drive forth.
Where then, they come, to hall of any lord;
And Caradoc hath said forth, the sire persuades;
Proffering wise word of reverend fatherhood.
These days, are silent all debate and strife,
Before that instant coming of the Romans!
They, erst, arrive in merchant Troynovant;
Where makes them feast the father of Marunus,
Cadern, o'er warlike wights, who palsied rules.
To Caer Calleva, of swart Segontorix,

They, sith, arrive. Thence journeying, with fresh steeds ;
They Caer Went left, on their nigh hand ; that eve,
Lodge, in the Sun's great plain, at Sorbiodunum.
Through march, then, of sea-dwelling Durotriges,
They drave ; and bridle draw, at Moridunion,[1]
Old city at the sea-waves, of generous Golam ;
And with him, three days, rest. Thence, they to Isca,
Ascend and tarry a se'nnight with Duneda.
Leaving Caer Isca ; they, through wilds, on steeds,
Now ride ; to visit far Belerion nation ;
Whose hill-set dune, which sacred to the sun,
Stands walled of the sea-waves. Yet, at ebb tide,
They dry-foot pass. A people of strange speech ;
And Decet is their warlike lord, who feast,
For Caradoc makes, and lords of Togodumnos.
Thence they, towards Dobuni, now, by Mendip, speed ;
Whose kings, to Catuvelaunian royal house,
Are nigh of kin. Sith, streaming Hafren passed ;
They, to that other Venta,[2] of swart Silurians,
Come ; where Moelmabon, Lord of Deheubarth,[3]

[1] Seaton, in Dorsetshire.
[2] *Venta Silurum*, (also called Caerwent,) beyond Severn.
[3] Land of the right-hand part ; now South Wales.

(Britons' West march,) with his five warlike sons,
They find, already, marshall thick caterfs.
Caradoc, there, waits king Idhig, seven days ;
Who warlike rules, o'er neighbour Demetans :
And, each eve, for Cunobelin's son, makes feast,
One of the warlike sons of Moelmabon ;
And all give ear, to wisdom of Manannan.

BOOK XII

ARGUMENT

KINGS Idhig and Kynan, in the West; and Antethrigus, in the East marches, receive Caratacus: who, journeyed further, finds Thorolf, at Branodunum. Caratacus, returned home, repairs to Verulam.

Decreed is now, in Rome, the invasion of Isle Britain. Claudius, emperor, appoints Aulus Plautius his legate. Revolt of the Illyric legions. Claudius trembles in Rome. Sedition in the legions; which, (now in Gaul,) should pass over, to war in Britain. Aulus writes back letters to the emperor Claudius: which, received in Rome, Cæsar recites them in the Senate. Aulus withdraws, to winter camps, his seditious legions.

Springtime returns. When, then, the legions are led forth, the troubles of the former year revive. Aulus, with the chief captains, flee by night. Vespasian rides, to view the revolted legions. Certain soldiers, risen in the night-time, slay them which had been ringleaders, in their revolt: which thus is ended. Aulus punishes the cruel centurions. He commands then, to draw out the fleet; and stand ready, to embark the legions. Abaddon flieth to Island Britain. Returned, he blows new rage in the Roman *castra*. Narcissus arrives, from Claudius. Mockery of the soldiers; who now, tumultuously, ascend their ships.

The warlike tribes in Britain await the dread coming of invading legions. The island nations, seen war-flames kindled on all beacon-hills; rise that night. The Roman

army at sea. Their seditious after-sailing squadron, rows to a nigh Briton shore. The former fleet, with the prætor, hath put in to a Belges' haven. Aulus sends back messengers to the rest, to join their camps with his. On the morrow, the again-ordered legions march upland, in Britain.

Caerwent. Aulus, in fenced *castra*, now waits the coming of Vespasian's legion. They, the ninth eve, arrive, from Gaul. Romans, marched forth, descry before them a great camp of blue Britons. Aulus' oration to his soldiers.

Battle joined; a mist descends upon the plain. The prætor blows repair. Valorous king Golam arrives, that night, with his Durotriges' warriors; and stout prince Morag, leading Dumnonians. The warlord's dream. Geta is marched forth, by night, with intent to fall upon the rearward of blue Britons. At day, Aulus joins battle. The warlord's foster-brethren fight, standing beside him, in the royal scythe-cart. Batavians assail the women's wains. Vigantios is first of blue Britons to yield ground to Romans. Women-warriors. The warlord's prayer, to his sun-god.

BOOK XII

THE ROMAN WAR IN BRITAIN

To Kynan also, king of Ordovices,
(Whose seats, most valiant nation of the hills,
Twixt the two Dees ; which, from nigh sacred wells,
Flow down, with hasting foot, to opposed part ;)
Called Hammer-axe, his word sent Caradoc ;
Asking, at Uriconium,[1] him to meet.

And, straight, that valiant king, by signal fires,
Answers in his high hills. The Demetans' king,
Eftsoon arrived : king Caradoc, sith, takes leave,
Of Moelmabon and his warlike sons.
Come the sixth eve, he lights at Uriconium.
There Hammer-axe, in giving faithful hands,
Sware to that new accord and common bond ;
Which is of all South Briton kings, gainst Romans.

Last, after many days, return their chariots,
When ripe, already, stands the Britons' corn,

[1] Wroxeter.

In wide Icenian fields. Stout Antethrigus
Sallies to meet them; (that chief magistrate,
Which expulsed Bericos; who, The-bane-of-Britain,
Hereafter named, dwells exile, now, in Rome.)
To Gunt, his city walled, that stands by Yare,
For potters' wares of name, mongst all East Britons,
He brings them forth, with pomp of battle-chariots.
There, two days, council holden is; and rest
Manannan, weary, and king Caratacus.
They speed, to Branodunum,[1] sith, and Thorolf.
Come before Hiradoc's town, they view war-keels,
Riding at anchor, of that royal Almain;
Whose summer booths stand, yonder, on waste heath.
And there, behold, is Thorolf, fleet of foot;
Running, with champions, in a shining harness.
So swift, is told, the ethling, in first youth,
Was; that, both harts in hills of Wittig's march,
And hinds, he hent: and, (tamed by his great force;)
Them herded, like a flock! Strive with the strong,
Is the hero's wont: all martial exercises,
(His puissant limbs, to furbish, from loathed rust,)
He daily useth forth. Seen arrive strangers,
He, in mid-course, stays: lo, cometh, then, anon!

[1] Brancaster, in Norfolk.

Holding in his high hand, (that he, for heat,
Hath doffed,) his glancing helm, with gilt boar-crest.
And to his shoulders large, raught, low adown ;
That seemed, of ringed red gold, his royal locks.
His fierce eyes shine, like this steep summer heaven.
  Now are the princes met, right hands they knit.
And when those young kings make exchange of arms,
Almains, beholding, in their war-camps, shout!
They cry out all impatient to warfield ;
Because, already, Summer draws to end.
Ween their young hearts, leading these Brennid dukes,
As Balder fair, not able to withstand,
Were, the whole world, their spears' victorious force!
  Now, after supper, mounts Caratacus,
With sire Manannan ; and, with hasty steeds,
Towards Camulodunum, guides, in dim moonlight.
So his heart yearns, to look on the loved face,
Again, of Embla. In month, they parted forth,
Of cuckoo's voice ; when, on the budded bough,
Hangs the new leaf ; and, three times, kine to pail,
Go home, from the fresh mead ; and, nightlong, chants,
Beside the Colne, the blissful nightingale.
  How leaps the heart of noble Caradoc ;

When he, now dawn, descries above the wood,
That tower of Camulus! Then, with whip, with voice,
Yet more the prince incites his flying steeds.
How pleasant is this heath, full of sweet bees;
Which gather honey, for the winter mead,
That source of strength, to kings and warriors:
(But, who shall taste it, wot the only gods!
For cometh dark homicide war, on the White Isle.)
Enters the city's gate, Cunobelin's son;
Under that sounding tower of Camulus.
Goes up, loud joyful crying, in the town!
Rattle, on the flint stones, his horses' hooves.
Rumble, bronze-shod, his wayworn nimble wheels.
All hail, with merry throat, Caratacus!
In that he, hastily, at his own royal court,
Arrives; from threshold issues of his house,
Clear as bright shepherd's star, the vertue and grace
Of Embla his spouse, with whom are magistrates;
For wends the queen, to visit round the walls.
Daughter of kings, she noble Britoness,
In absence of her lord, so doth, as hath
She seen in Rome. The rampire she from gate,
To gate, repaired; and gathers corn and arms.
And daily her citizens, she, with glaives and spears,

Leads forth, by Colne, to warlike exercises.
Tarries Caratacus, three days ; sith, repairs
He, to Caer Verulam, with the sire Manannan :
Impatient give account, to Togodumnos,
How all South Britons' kings and magistrates,
Have, on the altars of their sacrifices,
Together sworn, gainst Rome's invading threat !
And laud all men the wisdom of Manannan.

Now was, in these same days, decreed, in Rome,
Those legions, which, in Gaul, already, serve ;
Should pass the seas, to conquer a new world :
And namely Britain, which untouched, since Julius.
Impotent Claudius, gone forth, from the Senate ;
One Aulus Plautius, well expert in arms,
Appoints his legate, for that war in Britain.
This year, in Gaul, is great munition made ;
Are timbered ships, and, gathered corn ; prepared,
Is every kind of warlike furniture.
But rumoured, sith, grave tidings were, in Rome.
Revolt from Cæsar his Illyric legions !
Then fear, in every place, dread in men's hearts.
Is Aulus, in the City, long detained ;
Till draws this Summer season nigh to end.
And now approaching Autumn's stormy tide,

Levy the Almains camp, at Branodunum.
Last renowned Thorolf parts, with his war-keels.

Pass seven moons: then merchantmen, from Gaul,
Arrive, in haste to finish their affairs.
For is, those tell, assembled, to their coast,
Which looks toward Britain, great new Roman army;
With multitude of men of desperate fortune,
Which wont adventure follow of the legions.
Each day, in weather fair, like hounds, they sit,
Watching, with flagrant eyes, Britain's white cliffs;
From whence their hope is, they should turn enriched.
Quoth one, whilst his two spread hands he held forth;
How ready to embark them, rides great navy:
And each were, of these fingers, hundred ships,
So many he saw and more, the Romans' fleet!

Though lie, in all Gaul's river-mouths, Rome's navy,
The legions come not yet. Is who called Cæsar,
Most wretched wight, of all which dwell in Rome.
Lives Claudius, aye, adread of his own death;
Of every footstep! of each passing voice!
Under his lattice, made like iron cage.
He all day reads men's faces, fears to eat,
To walk, to sit, in strong barred walls, to sleep;

Lest, from the empty air, fall some new death.
And lately, in that sedition of Scribonius,
Were even his tottering private steps waylaid.
Whence now hath Claudius guard of German soldiers;
That fence him, day and night, with barbare spears.
Called to his cubicle, princes of the Senate,
Cæsar begins, yet trembling, to enquire,
What deem they? and stands it, in his might, depose
The imperial purple; which, unsought for, laid
Was on his shoulders. He, at least, would send,
Certain his freedmen, to explore the mind
Of dukes and legions, in each Roman Province.
Hardly persuaded, suffered doting Claudius,
Part, to Britannic war, his legate Aulus.

When now behold Rome's legions, from Gaul's shore,
Vast wandering Ocean, surges tumbling huge,
On the fast strand; moreo'er, and when they hear
Dwell many warlike tribes, in yond White Land,
Under whose cliffs, deep quicksands; and how Britons
Be giants of stature, (such men have they seen,
Porters, to some great lords, in marble Rome;
Other tall doorwards, in Rome's theatres,
Slaves, sons of captives, taken in Julian wars,)
Dark dread encumbers their Italic breasts.

Then, looking one on other, gan say soldiers;
How being in Italy, they to war, beyond
The world, took none oath to their *imperator.*
Is there none end of war, where ends the land!
And must even these cold grey waves redden soldiers,
With Roman blood! what little rests, from wounds;
Which they, in hundred battles, have received,
These many years; witness these now hoar hairs,
Their toothless chaps, witness these maims, these scars!
Naught else they gotten, which remain alive,
Have; even of raiment, naked is their flesh,
Under these plates of bronze! Have all their dukes
Returned, to Rome, enriched: they naught possess.
How few yet live, which fellows of their years,
Were yore conscribed, with them, in the self legions!
Are wars now to begin, in a new world?
And when, at length, to them, should be assigned,
Whose covenant nigh is out, long hoped-for fields;
Which, with what little gotten have their hands,
(And whereby only stands the public wealth,)
Were able to maintain their later age:
Were even that soil some forlorn fen or heath,
In hostile land; where dukes, that turn to Rome,
Should, last, them bid take to them wives; and rest!
They perish, by ambitions of the legates:

That those, triumphing, might, in ivory chariots,
With pomp and blowing shawms, re-enter Rome;
To pass, in all superfluous delights,
Their days, as gods, with immense gathered wealth,
Fruit of the warlike toil of their dead soldiers.
But we, which marched have, o'er vast travaillous Alps;
These score of years, must fight. Thus chat the soldiers;
Through long night-hours, about their supper-fires,
And in their leathern booths. When day now risen,
Many forsake their stations and the ensigns.
Cites the proprætor, by stern trumpet-throat,
To his tribunal, soldiers. Without arms,
Stand dissolute, now, before him, the three legions!
Their titles he recites, for glorious deeds,
Under the auspices of great former dukes,
Full hardly achieved, in many a bloody fight;
Augusta, *Valens*, *Victrix*, *Adjutrix*:
And that they minish naught of their high praise,
Nor dim proud lustre of their former deeds,
He exhorts. Even this sea-strait shall pervious
Be to the Roman virtue. Full of corn

And cattle, is yond fair plenteous soil of Britain!
Which lightly may be won. Should measured then,
Be land unto all who veterans, in their legions.
Who guileful merchants, fearing for their gains,
Gin pluck then, by their tunics, common soldiers.
Them, drawn apart, they whisper, in their ears,
What wealth were in that island enterprise;
What cattle, beauty of women, spoil of towns!
If any Roman soldiers doubt that voyage,
They, with their only servants, would ascend
Longships; and won unto themselves yond isles;
What wealth should all, of a new world, be theirs!
Dismissed the assembly; the tumultuous soldiers,
Incline, to words of some of theirs, their ears;
Whom, shoulder-high, men lift forth, on broad shields,
Persuading, first, require, of their poor lives,
The wage. Then heard was long seditious shout!
If any may return, to their own hearths,
Whose lives, their fellows dead, were saved to end,
Should such be, like to old lean beasts, outcast?

For this, (quoth they,) they tolerate, many years,
To lie out, worse than beasts, in cold and wet!
Nay, is none so wretched beast, as Roman soldiers!
Moreo'er they plain them of their crude centurions.
Such said, made bare, under their wretched weed,
Lean bodies, many show forth weals of rods.
They clamour, how, some small relief of tasks,
Must soldiers buy, out of their meagre wage;
Of those centurions, which their lives possess.
Consumed is, thus, their body and solde and cloth.
Marvel their spokesmen, at so vile a rate,
Her soldiers' lives, of Rome, should be esteemed!
The very plough-beves, that ere Roman fields,
When dies the day, have rest; but legionaries,
Must wake all nights, in arms; whereso it please,
Their dukes to lead, in soil of enemies.
Even who condemned, for crimes, are to the sword,
Or dig in mines, were in worse case, uneath.
Their dukes, aye greedy to devise new wars,
For to enrich them, of poor soldiers' loss,
(Which, sith, dight with triumphal ornaments,

Sit, purpled, in the first seats of the Senate,)
Wont, lightly in great adventure, cast whole legions.
But soldiers, by whose arms, they all achieve,
Naught have; nor when they, long years, serve abroad,
A license to repair home from the wars,
(Even from their winter-camps:) to see how lead
Their parents old their lives; and their own hearths!
Caligula, now, is slain; and that is scathe,
Who friend was, with oft gifts, to his poor soldiers.

Lo, mingled deformed routs, not Roman soldiers!
For loosed is now all warlike discipline.
Again, them, Aulus, with loud trumpet's throat,
To his tribunal calls: with insolent tumult,
They turn, once more, the prætor's word to hear;
From the sea-shore. Blaming them, Aulus shows,
With his right hand, white-shining cliffs of Britain!
In the other, he a rescript holds of Cæsar.

Soldiers, (he cries,) the emperor bids us pass.
And ye be unworthy, now, of Cæsar's trust,
Bear back to the *prætorium*, they, the eagles,
Whose duty it is; lest your seditious shouts,
Against the public-weal, should hear the gods!
Have memory, O soldiers, what their punishment is,
Which do forsake their legion's ordinance.
Yea, and if ye give occasion now to Gauls,
Inconstant nation, will ye not repent,
When ye have put in jeopardy your own state;
What time, and had ye overpassed to Britain,
Were the island prostrate, ended all the war.
But now, of all these things, write I to Cæsar.
Then Aulus, prætor, letters sealed, before
Them all. His ready messengers, bear them forth;
That put on, day and night, from post to post,
To horse. The tenth eve, those are come to Rome!

In Rome, reads, trembling, impotent Cæsar Claudius,
The words of Aulus: and, though night, commanded
He, the officer, straightway, summon a full senate,
To temple of Fidius. The emperor come, therein,
He, rheumy-eyed, those letters of his legate,
With stammering tongue, recites. Then, he himself,
Commiserates himself; who, cannot, Cæsar,
Put off this burden of the imperial state.
O times, O malice! But responds Vitellius,
Consul elect, chief flatterer, lately, was
Of mad Caligula, yet, in council, one
Found wise; Even as wont the immortal gods,
Ill men offend, so bring these care on Cæsar!
Ben they not Blæsus' legions, which, from Gaul,
To Isle Britannia, now, should overpass?
The same, which stationed, in Tiberius' days,
In wide Pannonia, and namely on both sides,
Danuvius' flood, that great sedition made;
Wherein, they tribunes cast forth and centurions?

Aye, and certain, in their fury, beat to death!
Which crimes, beheld his own eyes, in his youth;
What time he also served, in his first arms,
Being lodged in tent of great Germanicus.
Fathers, and most, quoth he, imperial Claudius!
My counsel is, Ye send Vespasian Flavius,
Leading his legion *Pia*, (rightly named!)
Aye well-affectioned to the imperial house,
In aid, (that time was also innocent;)
Which ever sith, in Germany, hath remained:
In aid, I say, to Plautius. The fleet soldiers,
(Men still found faithful,) able were, alone,
With wings of Gauls, allies, to chastise Britain.
Then first faint Claudius smiles. He smote together,
All in another mind, for joy, his palms.
And promised Cæsar, twenty Afric elephants,
(From Mauritania, lately again subdued,)
To draw his towers, in that Britannic war.
And, by divine Augustus' image, sware
Thereto, his palms outstretching! In new war,

Beyond Gaul's seas, would he, (as Julius, ere,)
Captain, himself, his legions' armament!
Vitellius moves; Be Cæsar's gracious words,
In tables graven, of undying bronze,
And solemn thanks recorded of the Senate.
Will follow, the divinity of Claudius,
The Roman legions. In this sense it pleased
Write letters; which they send, with speed, to Flavius.
The emperor bade enquire, and seek through Rome,
Out, who have knowledge of the parts and coasts,
Of Gaul, that look towards Britain. When of such,
(Merchant-provincials, come, for their affairs,
To the world's city,) is known, few weeks remain,
For navigation of those boisterous seas;
Claudius writes rescript, to his legate Aulus;
Charging withdraw, to winter-camps, the legions.

Lo, now the imperial speedy messengers;
Passed through Main Gaul, to those sea-camps arrive.
And, in armed troops, behold, Rome's legionaries,
Wander like robbers; and they spoil the Gauls!
Yet, weary of this new license, not few soldiers,
To hear the letters read, revert to *castrum*.

Sitting, before them, on high bank of sods,
Plautius' proprætor, then, oration made ;
He magnifies the high clemency of Claudius,
Permitting draw, to winter-camps, the legions.
Great, then, their shout, Live Cæsar ! from the shore.
Advance the eagles! Leave this curséd place!
Flavius Vespasian, with the legion *pia* ;
Which stationed to defend the Roman pale,
Against incursions of nigh warlike Almains,
Letters received, hath written back to Rome ;
That for new tumult, grown, beyond the Rhine,
Might he, as yet, not march, in aid, to Aulus.

When that long winter, entering now the sun,
In Aries, past ; behold the legate Aulus,
From winter-camps, again, leads forth his legions ;
The fourteenth, ninth and twentieth, to Gaul's shore ;
Which chosen in Rome, for the Britannic war.
But there the tumults of the former year,
Renew ; though noised is coming now of Claudius !
Soldiers, thrust forth their tribunes, from the *castra* :
They smite, with their own rods, those crude centurions.

Aye, and certain drawn without, they, in salt waves,
Drenched : and behold, wind-driven cold night billows,
Have cast, on the shole strand, their bodies dead !
Ringleaders, from a mound, then Rufus, Calvus,
Volturnius, Cropinus, (men that best could speak,)
Do loudly upbraid, and still rail on their dukes,
Men of soft city life, as used in Rome;
Perfumed and valiant only in the debauch:
Wretches, which, when they wasted have their substance,
Bethink them of new wars. And sith now spoiled
All lands are, they would lead o'er sea poor soldiers;
To fight in Britain, Isle beyond the world.

Aulus then, and chief captains, fled, by night,
Bearing the eagles, with them, of their legions ;
With hope, to save their lives, to camp of Flavius,
Vespasian, who makes forward, with great marches.
The fugitive dukes and ensigns were received,
Amidst the *pia* legion's four-square *castrum*.
Rode Flavius, then, with wing of Gaulish horse,
To view the state of those revolted soldiers.
But when that renowned captain seen approach ;

All hail him, those tumultuous legionaries :
Men call him, Father ! They, now, deformed routs ;
Do throng on him, an headless multitude.
Hunger their ears, to hear his martial voice.
All pray him, enter, in their desolate *castra.*
But, shaking forth his purple, he denies ;
That Roman duke, which Cæsar and the Senate,
Serves, with their fury, would be maculate.
On their heads, be the crime of this revolt.
And choose they, whether they, which once were soldiers,
Will, here, in border of their enemies,
Most warlike nations, with the legion *pia,*
Contend, when this, the third day, shall arrive ;
Or else revert to their obedience !
Which heard, they swarm the more, about his horse,
And humbly entreat great Flavius, lead them forth ;
And were it, to new war, beyond the world !
He, blaming them, persuades, they sue to Aulus,
Imperial legate ; that, for them, to Cæsar,
He intercede. The punishment, is, of soldiers ;
Soldiers, which make sedition, in the field,
That each tenth man, by lot, should suffer death !

There brake great Flavius off; and turned the duke,
With austere looks, from them, his horse. In troops,
They follow him; but rode Vespasian, forth.
The same night, certain constant legionaries;
(Which spoken have together,) weary of this
Excess, men faithful to their sacrament,
Have armed them, secretly; and, when the camp slumbers,
They tents of, who ringleaders were, Volturnius,
Cropinus, and other more, with iron, invade;
And them they slay! Loud outcry rose, of soldiers,
Then, in the dark! that start from heavy sleep:
And wot not, wounded, why they fight and die!
Come dawn, and seen; how slain, all those men, lie,
Who authors of their fault: with one accord,
Soldiers send message, to the legate Aulus.
And, for were now their camps contaminate,
With civil blood; all, with their tents, pass forth,
With troubled looks, to pitch, by the sea-side.

Returns, the third day, that stern duke Vespasian,
With whom rides Aulus, midst the *pia* legion,
In battle ray, being winged with Gaulish horse.
Hark! stretching stern hands forth, those Flavian soldiers,

Clamour, them lead, gainst the revolted legions.
Sith, they alone, embarking, would win Britain.
Without their tents, stand the three legions' soldiers ;
Tents, seen, confusedly pitcht, longs the sea-shore.
And lay all blame, their orators, come to Aulus,
Unto that forepast cruelty of their centurions.
Vespasian and the legate, found the *castra*,
With corses, strewed ; that were they cleansed, commanded,
From civil blood ! Restored, then, to the legions,
Their prefects, Aulus mounted, with stern countenance,
To his tribunal. He ordains, before him,
Then, pass centurions : he, in that, enquires
Of each, his stipends, deeds of hardihood ;
And whence obtained he martial ornaments.
And whom, with loud cry, soldiers of his cohort
Approve, confirms the duke : but when, unto any,
They all, impute immanity, in his service,
Or avarice ; he his sergeants, beat, with rods,
Bids, (laid on such arrest ;) and they deface,
Deposed from all authority, his helm's crest.
Descended Aulus, soldiers take their ranks.
With trumpet-sound, march the new-ordered cohorts,
To the sea-brinks ; and they, their impure hands,
There wash : then lifting, at new clarions' voice,

To heaven ; all those, (which they did violate,)
To the emperor, loud ! renew their sacrament.
Aulus, that all might hear, with a great voice,
Draw out! commands the Prefect of his fleet;
And ride, at anchor ; to embark the legions!

Now dies the evening red, on those cold waves,
Which compass in, Isle, crowned with long white cliffs,
Our foster-Britain. Glooming soon the skies,
I, (quoth the Muse,) saw in vast gore-swart cloud ;
Whose cliffs like pearl, and towers as shining gold ;
On thrones, that seemed of crystal, azure, made,
Sit demon shapes. Lord, Taran, of the lightning,
In highest place : then woad-stained Camulus.
Upon the counter-part, sate Nerth and Taith,
Unto whom wont Britons mere-stones dedicate,
God of all paths, and leader of the dead ;
And Nemeton, hag, whose hellish spell can turn
The hearts of men, to wolves, in warlike field.
Sit lesser war-gods, round those misty walls ;
Bran, helmed ; and Caradoc, leaned on blood-stained
targe,
And divine arms. Gods, without voice ! discourse,
(Save wind-gods murmured, on that murky floor,)
With looking only of their glowing eyes.

They reason of the war toward, with Romans ;
Wherein they shall contend, with Latin gods.
Is dog-faced Hesus, porter of the gods,
Without, keeps ward. Lean, girt in filthy clouts,
To their cloud-hall, would enter Pestilence ;
But Hesus her debars, whose carrion breath,
Would all infect, and grieve even demon-gods.
A cup she bare, betwixt her loathly claws ;
Wherein, now, baleful mixture poured the fiend ;
Even plagues which thee o'erhang, fair warlike Britain !
Then I beheld, towards Head of white-cliffed Kent ;
And saw, dark effigied, in dim twilight cloud,
Great flying shadow ! Comes, manslaying demon,
Now dread Abaddon, from the Gaulish main :
(Was he which breathed sedition, in the legions !)
Would slay our island-Gauls, this homicide fiend.
And as, oft-times, we bleak-sheen, in the sun,
Some crow see shine ; at first blench, this might seem
Angel of light ! Lighted, on cliff ; to him,
(Falls, in whose shadow, blight and extreme curse !)
Resort the Isle's dark gods. Erst, horrid Math,
Britons' tremendous, impious, god of death :
(Can all gods not hold back his dread iron hand !)
The Morrigu then, crowned with a waning moon ;
(Is she night-riding queen of murderers ;)

With Clothru and horrible Ethne, in her train :
Whom follow, hag-born, burden of the night,
Dim, bat-like, flittering brood of aery spirits ;
Whose power increaseth, in the evening mists,
As day's light wanes. Abaddon, demon, shines,
With peacock feathers, full of glorious eyes,
Mongst them a moment ; that incline their heads.
Yet, for all his great looks and lofty port,
Of pride, presumptuous, crooked festering corse
Is the Fiend's substance ! (dread corruption drops,
And loathly worms,) of murdered wicked wight,
Whom buried beetles, in 'lone cankered grove.
None other flesh, (for greater power, to-night,
Him lets ; it is great Albion's, in the earth !)
Might the man-slaying demon-angel take ;
Who, puffed-up that foul carcase, rose therewith.
He, from whose fearful eyes, hell-pangs look forth,
Prepared beholds destruction of our Isle !
Well-pleased, then, casting backward baleful looks,
Lifted his spotted wings, the immane fiend,
Returns, towards Gaul. Under his heavy flight,
Is ferment of the sea, that roars for dread.
Arrived o'er legions' camps, his hellish breath,
Blows up new bubble rage. From mouth to mouth,
Then, murmur rose, Will Summer soon be wasted!

Soldiers repent, that slowness of their hearts;
Which ere a war refused, had them enriched.
They, in the moonlight, oft, for yet is night;
Look out, on that great navy in their road.
Now, this same night, arrived, from the emperor Claudius,
Narcissus, a chief freedman of the palace.
With a great train and retinue this, from Rome,
Of cooks and varlets, the vast Alps hath passed.
Loud clarion calls, at sunrise, legionaries,
To the tribunal! they, in curule chair,
See sit one, higher than the imperial legate!
Narcissus, whose right hand holds Cæsar's rescript.
(The bill, as Claudius' face, is doubly engrossed;
That should, according to the time, be read
Rebuke or consolation.) But stout soldiers,
Anon, incensed, hearing shrill unmanned voice,
Of so base harlot, raised in their reproof!
Contemn him saying; Taints the air with unguents,
Yond piping scold! Is, (they, loud mocking, cry,)
This All-fools' day? when slaves, at masters, play.
Yond Cæsar's ribald, king of minstrels is!

A fury, amidst these taunts, their hearts invades.
To sea, to ship! men yell, tumultuous.
They run, take arms. Some, the *sacellum* break:
And snatcht their eagles, stretch, to them, right hands!
Returned to camps, they pluck up tents; and carriage
Bear forth. Break soldiers, headlong, with great voice,
To shore; and loud invoke the blue sea-gods.
Who foremost, from the shelving strand, launch out,
What barks they find. Some row, to hulls of charge;
Some climb, confusedly, the longships, aboard.
This dures, till afternoon; to night, then, holds:
Nor any stays to sup. Wide-shines the moon,
Nigh to her full, on spring-flood; and them gives,
Large light, to sea. Dukes hasty counsel take.
Soldiers, with wings of horse, of Flavius' legion,
Would sally, against them, which tumultuous, thus,
Inship. But, asked his sentence, great Vespasian
Responds to Aulus; Impulse is, methinks,
Come on them, from the gods. Were reason use
The occasion; and now overpass, to Britain!
Aulus bade sound out clarions! he commands;
That all which mounted on shipboard, descend,

Again, to land ; that ordered they, aright,
Were in their several cohorts. Whilst the legate,
Yet spake, springs merry wind. Men mainsails hoise ;
And, lo, from Gaul's shore, borne forth Roman navy !

Pass tardy, in Britain, these erst summer weeks.
In every commote and in every lathe,
Assemble, each new moon, the land's armed youth,
To their lords' courts, for warlike exercises.
All lie down, nightly, on their shields and arms.
Now days of heat ; but Romans come not yet !
Spies bring in word, then, of the lord Manannan ;
From sea, of new sedition, mongst the legions.
Nor, yet, comes Thorolf ; who hath homely wars,
Against his father's foes, on the Fast-land.
Nor yet were seen, breasting the cold wave-rows,
The pirates' keels : for lord is dead, king Orm,
Of the East-way ; at whose high funerals,
In days, when should be parted all his wealth,
His son, Redshield, (so named, for he his targe,
In every slaughter, leading strong ship-swarms,
Wont dye, in war-gore of his enemies !)
Shall make land and sea plays, of running steeds ;

And champions rowing in long dragon-ships;
And shows of the seven noble skills of warriors,
Swimming and wrestling, playing at the ball,
Climbing and javelin-cast, the dance and course
Of foot and horse; and who, with bow and shaft,
Can cleave the willow-wand: and who best make,
Riddles and weapon songs; and best record,
Playing on ivory harp, in prince's hall,
Glorious war-deeds of old. And for Redshield,
Should precious meeds divide, with a large hand;
Gather, to him, from every coast, longships.

A light Dumnonian keel, of king Duneda,
Did first, men tell, espy that Roman navy,
Standing towards Britain, with confuséd noise!
To an headland, made those Iscans force of oars;
They tyned, (to that prepared,) there, tarry wood.
Watchmen, on Cantion cliffs, which, to the night,
Look forth, those over-sea red flames discerning,
Kindle their beacons. Answer beacon fires,
Soon burning, on all hills, to farthest Britain.
The sleeping Isle, at midnight, wakes to arms!
Speeding, already, at dawn, lo, thousand war-carts,
To Cantion cliffs, arrive. From Camulodunum,
Horse and light-runners, with Caratacus,

To ward East shore, rush forth. Towards wide
Thames'-mouth,
Archers of Troynovant march, with stout Marunus.
Assemble, with great power, proud Catuvelaunians.
In this first night, eight thousand were come in,
To Verulam, armed. And when new morrow breaks,
Them marshals, in Ver meads, forest of spears,
Cunobelin's son, and orders in caterfs.
Sword-men, in front, he sets; and who bear spears,
In the hind ranks. By fifties, then, the chariots,
He squadrons, with their captains, in loose bands.
Druids draw ensigns, from their hallowed groves.
The sun yet young, they march forth from Caer
Verulam.

Careless of aught, save haste, the legionaries
Lose their most travail, labouring at the oars,
With so uncunning hands, to-night; and oft
The tacklings burst of their mishandled sails.
They solace them, with the rude songs of soldiers.
And flames, lo, comet-star, hanging athwart
The heavens, like Persic glaive, from part to part;
Whose point, before them, Britain seems invade.
Their dukes, at dawn, (which followed, have this
night,

In the longships; scouring with sail, uneath,
And oar;) assay, amidst this confused fleet,
To bring some order. They, the medléd ships,
Do part, then, in two squadrons, of their navy.
The first shall sue the legate's purple sail;
The next, just distance keep, of a large mile.
For that, erewhile, deposed Icenian king,
(Whom after-ages named The Bane-of-Britain,)
Fell Bericos, sent then the proprætor Aulus:
He, likewise, sends for Belgic COGIDUBNOS.
(They, newly, with Narcissus, came from Claudius.)
Those, brought before the legate, asks them Plautius,
Where deem they best in Britain, were take land?
Bericos responds, Longs his Icenic coast!
But Cogidubnos, contrarywise, persuades,
With many words, towards setting sun, hold course;
Where Belges' march, and he hath many friends.
The pilots look, to make, soon, Head-of-Kent.
Long that day's heat, and merry their sails' flight:
But weary, in the strait hulls, that smell of pitch,
Abhor, their very souls, faint Roman soldiers.
Made Aulus sign, then; Steer, for Belges' coast!
Yet a long summer day, on vast grey deep,
The Romans heave. But, when now, falling round
Them, the third night, gin murmur legionaries;

Said we not rightly, and being yet in Gaul,
Was this Britannic war beyond the world?
That after-squadron, lying on loose oars,
In wide moonshine, were heard, of many soldiers,
Seditious cries. Then some, drawn furious glaives,
Hack bands and stays; and hardly are they appeased.
Sith, when begins the day, at length, to break;
Midst the unending and unstable billows,
Rising the sun, from part of the Mainland;
They, no more, might discern the forward fleet;
But certain headland, nigh them, and low shore.
Impatient turn, then, all the sea-tossed soldiers,
With furious brunt of oars, to that green land,
Their stems. Where now they see some river's mouth,
They row to enter. Helped then of the tide,
The first being come in; soon made fast their prows,
Men leap, to rushy banks, out, and green mead:
Other, not few, ships rowed, to open shore.

Soldiers, in Britain's meadows, pitched their tents;
(They, in yond upland, see none hostile arms!)
Lie slumbering-out their long sea-weariness,
On the sweet herb: and say, One day or twain,

Would they, here, rest; and then repair from Britain.
They drive this sun forth, thus, with sullen hearts,
Empty of worth and honour; that forsake,
Against their sacrament, the imperial legate.
Behind them vast sea's waves, before them Britons!
Nor they have duke, save this old chiding Geta.
Fleet-soldiers gone up, on the green hill-bents,
Mongst thyme and gossamer, looking stedfast forth;
View not their consort fleet! At afternoon,
Who watch, see glance of arms. Descends a troop.
Horsemen, of Belges; fifty spears, approach!
Bright harnessed, a tall lord, before them, rides.
The men, whose long red hairlocks, backward blown,
Are of high looks, and like to Belgic Gauls.
They bear round bucklers, dight with hammered hide,
Of the wild ox: their mantles, long-fringed, broached,
With bronze, hang, party-coloured, o'er buff coats;
Which scaled, with glittering tin, of the White Isle.
Lo, wavering, on their shoulders, long war-spears,
As they fast ride. Three come, with them, half-Romans,
Chapmen of Gaul; sons, (pale, are those, of face,)
Of Romans and their stranger Gaulish wives.

They, in the former fleet, had sailed with Aulus.
They put to-day their lives, for promised meed,
In this adventure; knowing both the tongues,
To be interpreters, as twixt Gauls and Romans.
  Stood Aulus' fleet in, under island Vectis;
And anchors warped, in haven called the Longport,[1]
(Harbour of ships,) which in the lordship is,
Of Cogidubnos, who his foster-Britain
Betrays. Disbarked the legions, measured camps,
The legate set strong watch. He sent then forth
Horsemen, with Cogidubnos, longs East shore;
To seek the lateward fleet. Soon, those find Britons:
For, from a nigh dune, ridden, with fifty spears,
Came certain friend of his, to Cogidubnos,
One Beltucadros, saying; his people saw
The Romans' second navy row to land:
Then those returned, to the proprætor Aulus:
Who, straight, caused, mongst the merchant-sort be cried;
Romans, which can Gaul's tongue, might large reward,
Win, with those men, interpreters, to ride:
And he, for surety of their lives, would bind
As many Belges, in the legions' *castra*.
These Romans, pale, then offered them to wend,

[1] Portsmouth and Porchester Harbour.

With the armed Britons; (pale, as aye adread
Of the dire altars of the island's druids!)
And they bear letters, from the prætor Aulus.
Geta the seal upbreaks; and reads, The legate
Of Cæsar, in the war begun in Britain,
Unto who chief captains, in the second fleet,
Greeting. We entered now this Belges port;
And hear, in the same tide, ye went to land.
Now, when these letters ye have read, make speed,
To march unto my *castra*, with your soldiers:
And, put to sea, the mariners of your ships
Row, Westward forth, longs shore, to this Longport.
Such, from green bank, a loud-voiced scribe of Geta,
Outreads. And soldiers standing him around,
Make answer, with one mighty throat, Strike tents!
And, to our fellows, march! The tribune Geta,
Spake; that they silent march, in hostile soil;
Where is dark night as a vast ambushment.
Nigh was sun-setting; when, led, by their guides,

In land of aspect strange, the legionaries
Make forth, long trains. Toward clear star, lies their path,
Under yond golden pillars of Orion,
Celestial gateway; which, now the third month,
Low over Britain lies. Behind them, soon,
Like a vast brazier, the bright heaven-queen,
Riseth o'er strange dim field. Cynthia! they hail her:
And lightened are their hearts. Much moor, they pass;
Where cries of the wild curlews, from night loft,
Seem shrieks of aery spirits. They hear no bark
Of hound, in the night peace; they see no wight:
Far from these pastures, Britons have driven their beasts.
Mid-watch was, when they see shine thousand fires,
Of sleeping legions: hear now Roman clarion.
With shout! they answer, and to camp arrive.

Short are these summer nights: now early in Britain,
The morrow breaks. Dukes marshal, then, the legions;
And each pass forth, to their own bands and ensigns,
The soldiers. Now arrayed, without the vallum,

Aulus, on a white steed, before them, rides.
Blaming their errors past; he sharply exhorts,
To purge their fault, by valiancy in arms.
In Cæsar, pardon lies or punishment.
Then he, saluted the victorious eagles,
Spake; Rest they, this day, out, furbish their arms;
To-morrow march; the third day, look to fight.
All lifting then right hands, in glittering ranks,
In Britain's fields, raise, loud, long Latin shout!
Being come all ships, now, in, to the Longport,
He, with his letters, sends, to Gaul, back, part;
Thence, to convey Vespasian's faithful legion,
And wings of the allies. The rest, drawn up,
Casts Aulus, round about them, long paled bank;
And cohorts leaves, to keep this naval camp.
When, now, (pale Daughter of the East,) treads forth,
The silver-footed Dawn, in saffron stole,
Broidered with pearl, from threshold of the gods,
Of shining gold; and, soon, in heaven's steep path,
Roll burning wheels of Belin, daily god,
Whom living diadem crowns, of lightning rays:

At clarion's second sound! Rome's legions march;
With horsemen, guides, of Belgic Cogidubnos.
By field, by seeded plots, well-tilled, in guise,
Of Gaul, they hold; which Belges, with wheel-ploughs,
(Good husbands,) ear, and dress the stubborn clod,
With marle. Of Britons, few half-naked wights,
Were seen; men breeched with skins, whose wattled bowers,
High round-built cabans, thatcht with shining reeds.
Scouts go before; on either part, ride horse;
(Belges, are those whom Cogidubnos sends.)
Journey the Roman legions, long, armed trains:
And erst, where flows, by Caer Went[1] street, clear stream,
They lodge. Is that best water, to bleach line,
In Belges' march. And, lo, a weavers' town,
Whose clattering looms; (for they, who there wont dwell,
Are fled,) to-day, in the forsaken place,
Lie silent. Aulus caused, to be, by trumpet,
Proclaimed: Are Romans friends to Belges' nation,
For which cause, he forbids their town his soldiers.
By Further-Belges, yet uncertain friends,

[1] *Venta Belgarum*; now Winchester.

Then Romans march. Them lead their guides, not far,
From Caer Calleva, of king Segontorix.
The legions halted, in a covert place,
Mongst hills, to rest; and cause this midday heat.
Some eat then bread; and all depose their arms.
  Sudden, with dreadful yells, cerulean Britons'
Shrill scythe-carts break out, on them, from thick woods.
Well can those drivers wield, in swift career;
Or hold, on an hill-bent, their rushing teams.
Their chariots leap and run, with hideous din,
Of creaking axe-trees. Ride, on each, two warriors:
Britons run hardily out, on their yoke beams,
To fight with Romans, or thence hurl forth javelins;
Or, lighted, as stout footmen, they contend.
  And whom they slay, in view of all the army,
Their off-lopt polls, all-bloody, (atrocious sight!)
They, on dire hooks, hang round their furious war-carts.
Upleapt, with scornful vaunt, then, those drive forth:
And their bronze whirling naves, whereon be set
Sharp sickles, Romans reap, with griesly deaths;
And pierce long scythes, before their horses' breasts:
And scourging, here and there, with rattling wheels;
All bloody, they o'erdrive who fallen of Romans.

Last Roman virtue, with inclinéd shields,
And javelins'-cast, repulsed the Britons' war-carts;
Which, few, draw off, to breathe their smoking steeds.
He who durst, erst, encounter with Rome's legions,
Swart Guledig is, renowned Segontorix,
Calleva's king, of Atrebatan nation,
Semblant divine, of hardy strength and skill,
In arms: and nephew of old Commius;
Who vowed eternal enmity to Romans.
Is his that helm, of bronze, which two-horned seen.
Issued the legions' trains, from cumbered paths,
They march few leagues; and now, by a brook side,
In meadows, lodge. Here, seemed it good, to Aulus,
In fenced camp, Flavius, certain days, abide:
For brought-in Cogidubnos' scouts have tiding,
Of great approaching host, of woad-stained Britons;
Led by young warlike son of dead Cunobelin.
Strenuous Vespasian hath, with thousand horse,
Of Roman Gaul, and stout Batavians, passed,
(Twelve hundred spearmen,) now, in those sent ships,
Britannic seas; and, with his faithful legion,
Disbarked, at the Longport. This ninth eve, he,
His army leads, into the legate's *castrum*!
Cæsar's new rescript added Flavius' cohorts,
Hath, to Britannic army of Aulus Plautius.

At day, now, the four legions levied camps ;
March forth, few leagues, in warlike ordinance.
Ere noon, explorers, sent before, renounce ;
They saw lodged, not far off, cerulean Britons,
Caterfs of footfolk, with much power of chariots !
And now the legate, past hill-brow, discerns
Great camps of barbare host, wide-shining arms!
Whom four-wheel wains fence, in vast circuit, round.
Then Aulus, tribunes of his marching trains,
Bade, halt the va'ward, without trumpet sound ;
And passing, each, to part, on either hand ;
Range them those former legions. The third, then,
Valens, which cometh on, the middle hold :
The fourth, to-day, their carriage shall defend.
The legions thus arraying them, rides Aulus,
Before their orders ; and exhorts his soldiers,
Saying ; Lies yonder, the blue Britons' army !
Nations, whom virtue and fortune of great Julius,
In old days, of our grandsires, overcame.
Ye ninth, ye fourteenth and ye twentieth legions,
This day blot out the memory of your revolt,
Showing yourselves, as erewhile valiant soldiers ;

That I, to-morrow, writing to the Senate,
At large; may set forth your victorious merit!
Seems, straightway, all that Roman field, in Britain,
To burn; for myriad hands do-on bright helms,
(Which cast broad brazen gleam, against the sun,)
At once! Draw veils, then, of their Sabine shields.
Sith, with swift foot, and eager angry heart,
And clenchéd teeth, at clarions' voice, advance,
Impatient unto battle, in thick ranks,
Like to one man, the Power of mighty Rome!
Blue Britons rise up, dreadful, with strange ensigns,
By tribes, caterfs and kindreds; that might, thus,
Of every one, the valour more appear,
Before his people. Station the island horse,
On the two wings. In Britons' battle front,
Are shining squadroned chariots: glittering dukes,
Drawn of white steeds, before them, slowly ride.

Voice raught of duke, even to the ears of Romans;
Who seemeth one nobler than the rest. In chariot,
Emailléd white, he stands; and his bright scythe-
wheels,
Glister with brazen rays, like sunny beams.
Lo, where that duke draws bridle, he makes speech,
And shines his targe, before him borne, with gold:

And son is he, say Belges, of Cunobelin !
King of the royal tribe of Catuvelaunians.
From Verulam marched, now warlike Togodumnos,
Awaits, the coming of king Caradoc ;
With whom, Icenians' power, leads Antethrigus ;
And, archers of Caer Troynovant, leads Marunus.
Tiding, to the warlord, of their approach,
Is come, by shout. Sit blue, wayfaring, Britons,
Each on a wad of halm, or on his bratt,[1]
(Their nation's guise,) armed ranks, on the fresh grass.
Naked, behold, glast-stained, above the belt,
Be all these long-haired island warriors.

And chosen hath Britons' warlord, Togodumnos,
This place wherein he would abide the Romans.
There fenceth his left hand, dark beechen wold ;
Upon his right, lie fenny pools ; his front,
Ordered like bow, and chariots on the wings ;
Whereby he hopes close-in his enemies.
Not to join battle, reads divine Manannan,
Ere Caradoc, with the East-men, be come in.
The sire too old, though, nourished of a god,
His age, to stand in battle-cart ; hath bound,
(Gift of his father Lîr, the blue sea-god,)

[1] A Celtic word : cloak.

His divine hauberk, which no dint may pierce,
Of bronze, nor steel, before the warlord's breast,
With his own hands ; hands which, with sacrifices,
He lifted hath, unto the unborn gods !

Romans, with their allies, and the armed servants ;
And who adventure follow of the legions,
In Britain, are as fifty thousand glaives,
More, twice-told, than hath warlord Togodumnos.
Aulus, the Romans' front, in triple ranks,
Ordains. Stands, furlong-wide, each glittering legion,
All ready to run forth. He duke and tribunes,
With guard, outride, to view blue Britons' army.

To Dobuni and Catuvelaunians, kindred tribes,
Stout Belges Atrebats be joined, in arms.
Chief of the Belges warriors, bear mailed thongs,
With scaly brass, on their large warlike chests.
Are hand-breadths of waved iron, the sheen sharp heads
Of their stiff spears. On nigh hill-ground stand druids ;
Whose magic chant borne on the wavering wind.

The sitting Britons clash their arms, and chant
Hoarse songs of antique wars and battle-gods ;
When cease they to hear words of Togodumnos ;
Whose fiery wheels draw three renowned fleet steeds ;

White-locks, with Gold-hoof, and, their dam, Blue-mane.
His upper garment girds that shining belt,
Of strength ; whence, in his flesh, the warlord feels
New virtue, infused, of Britons' battle-gods.

Scythe-carts, outrushing, pursue Roman dukes ;
That turned are back, inglorious, to their legions,
In sudden flight. Loud barbare trumps, sound-out !
Like many pastors blowing a grave note,
Upon that Latin Plain, which lies round Rome.
Scourge Briton charioteers their steeds, with shout ;
Whose noise, whose aspect strange, of whirling hooks,
Affray, that trembling snort, Gauls' allies' horse :
And shrink their runners, from the arméd carts,
And shot of javelins, of who, in them, ride.
Britons, like hawks, leap down, from rushing chariots :
And, off-hewed polls, they hang, with vaunting cries,
On hooks, round their shrill justling battle-carts ;
Dire spectacle unto Romans, which advance,
With angry shout, the eagles : legionaries,
Running, hurl forth, at once, sharp sleet of javelins.
On his part, Britons' warlord, Togodumnos,
The hardy vigour of the Island Youth,
Upleads, gainst Romans ; that, now, with long shout,

Draw out their shining glaives. Fall woad-stained Britons,
(Whom choose tremendous gods, to-day, of death,)
With Roman soldiers, on their foster-earth.
They more, (not fenced,) than fall of Romans' part:
Yet glory and shout their fellows, in their deaths!
Deeming that enter bodies, of who rest,
Their valiant spirits, which should augment their strength.
Stagger the legions, like long spumy chines
Of the sea-waves, hurled backward of fierce winds.
King Togodumnos sent forth thousand chariots,
To close in then left horn of shaken Romans.
And haply had, this day, seen their overthrow;
Were not that a South wind, which softly blows,
Down-rolling the hills' mist, their battle dimmed.
Fearing some ambush, blows repair then Aulus;
Whose guides say, cause was magic chant of druids,
That able are men transmew, to stones and trees!
Then measure, hastily, *castra*, Roman soldiers,
With a deep trench; and crown with high, paled, bank,
More than their wont; wherein, withdraw the legions.
Night fallen, sends Aulus waterers, to nigh stream:

But whilst these, in cold currents, fill their sacks,
Fall out, on them, the Guledig's ambushed chariots;
Which mingle, with their drink, the Roman blood!
To tent assembled, now, of Plautius, legate;
The legions' dukes consult. Through Belges' scouts,
Is known, (confirm the Britons' beacon fires,)
To-morrow should augment their enemies.

Then license Geta asks, to lead his cohorts,
About yond hills, to-night; to fall, at dawn,
On Britons' backs. Prescribes much, also, Aulus,
To captains of the allies, Gauls and Batavians;
All, only, in battle seek they Togodumnos.
Great should be his reward, whose hand should take,
The Britons' duke; or bring his off-hewed head.
Now shrouds night darkness, both the hostile armies,
In their fenced camps. Neath oak's wide-spreading arms,
Shelter from dew, with martial Togodumnos,
Sit dukes of thousands, captains of caterfs,
Glast-stained; whose necks, with red wreathed gold, are dight.
Mongst many swart-hewed, stern-browed warriors' faces,

Which, with the warlord, sit ; and whereon gleams
Red light of watchfires, some white bounteous looks
Be seen of noble women. To war-field,
In four-wheel wains, these followed have their lords ;
And gaze their pupils, as who, to high heavens,
Make devout vows ! And warlike Britons deem,
Oft moves, in women, a divining spirit,
As were instinction of some heavenly gods.
Bear bows, the most of their white gracious hands.
Erst, of Manannan, asks the Verulam king,
His counsel : who makes answer, Gaul have Romans,
Subdued, by only skill of arms, and sleight
Of dukes, and plate before their soldiers' breasts.
Wherefore our young men bind, to battle, armed,
Their bratts, before their chests : so fight they, vowed
All warlike spoils, to bloody Camulus.
Spake, likewise, Iddon, late returned from Rome.

Hark bruit ! and is the mighty mingled tread,
Of horse and foot-folk ; which, in this dim night,

Approach, with men that hold forth brands, in chariots.
Comes Golam, valorous lord of Moridunion,
Who Durotriges' caterfs leads; and Morag,
Son to the king Duneda, with Dumnonians.
Those princes leap to ground, out of their war-carts!
Taking their hands, which touch his glaive, for both
Those are his friends, stern Togodumnos smiles.
And they, which now of this day's battle heard;
And see the fresh-bound wounds, of many lords,
Stand silent, musing vengeance, their young hearts.
Them shows the Roman watchfires, Togodumnos!
And, his stern voice, warns captains of caterfs;
Must be to-morrow's battle, with much blood.

Whilst rest, under the stars, (save who keep watch,)
The Roman arms; in dream, sees Togodumnos,
Of sleep, his hero-sires, Belin and Brennus,
In antique guise, and glorious Heremod;
As were they come, from mansion of the gods,
Standing on grave-hill, fast-by Troynovant.
Howbeit perceives, not well, Cunobelin's son,
Their antique speech; which tells of coming ill!
He wakes, and their dark words are in his ears,
Though fades the sense: but falls a sore constraint,

On the young warlord's heart. Before the dawn,
The night-wind, as great mourning harp, in woods,
Sounds. Togodumnos rose, and so went forth,
To visit round all camps of his caterfs.
He knows each woad-stained nation, by their arms.
A dew is sprent, like blood, on the night-grass.
And mizzling rain steeps Britons' bulls'-hide shields.
Is rainbow seen, before the sun, that mounts.
Cohorts, which Geta leads, have strayed, all night.
Last, halted they, in thick and hollow place ;
He sent out scouts. Now erst, when stars announce,
Is nigh the dawn, his spies, returned, rehearse;
How, full they found of marching men, all paths :
Britons arrived to Britons, are this night.
They creeping, close, might shroud themselves, uneath ;
In grove, whence heard they strange loud chant of druids.
Then saw they Britons' priests, by altar-fires ;
And captives, by them, bounden, stripped of weed;
Whom, heard their cries, perceived we to be Romans!
Whilst stood, (quoth they,) with horror, still our hearts ;

Priests smote those men, as beasts of sacrifice.
And rent their panting breasts, on the cold grass!
They pluckt forth reeking hearts, from Roman breasts!
Stood silent Geta's soldiers! Then great oaths,
They sware, to crucify, in Britain's war,
All whom might take their hands, of barbare druids.
Geta erects there, in three ranks, his cohorts.
Bird-gazing druids, which, from twilight hills,
The early flight devise of morning birds;
Now, springing dawn, descry those marching Romans!
And blow their crooked horns, of horrid sound.
Like to grim boar, that rusheth from dank wood,
Issues Segontorix, with swift battle-carts,
Calleva's king, and warriors' thick caterfs.
Had lodged, last night, the Guledig, on this part.
Gainst whom outrun, hurling their javelins, soldiers.
Romans draw forth, then, their short stabbing glaives.
They, angry, stubborn Belges Atrebats,
Bear back, on their piked shields, tumultuous,
Maugré huge force of king Segontorix;
Who slaughter makes of all, before his face!
But Belges' warhorns' hoarse and dreadful note,

Heard, afar-off, of martial Togodumnos;
Fearing some evil turn, he hastes send out,
In aid, caterfs of Catuvelaunians;
Men wont stand fast, in battle, like a wall,
The Wall-of-Verulam, named, in chants of Britons.
Before them, rush loud-rumbling, swift war-chariots;
With sounding hooves of long-maned island steeds.
Stand noble young men, in those battle-carts,
With crackling whips, or run on their yoke-beams,
Painted, like dragons, with a bloody crest:
Whence they hurl down, on soldiers, sleet of javelins.
Certain light-armed, that march before the cohorts,
Grounding their spears, erst find, to withstand chariots;
Batavian foot-folk, men of kin with Almains,
Isle-dwellers, twixt two rivers of the Rhine:
And they exceed all Gauls, in barbare force.
Stern Guledig shouts, above the battle-din!
And soldiers fall; betwixt the Atrebats,
And spears of Catuvelaunians, which arrive.
And voice, aye more, of swart Segontorix,
Lord of the two-horned helm, like trump, cheers on,
The late beat-back, again victorious, Britons.

And where, in further field, rides Togodumnos,
Is vehement battle joined. Had Aulus, legate,

Led, at sunrising, all his legions, forth,
From *castra*, in wide plain, gainst the caterfs.
And, lo, Cunobelin's son, ensign of Britain,
Standing, sublime, in white-emailled, winged, war-cart,
Blue Britons' brunt upleads, like the sun-god.
Helmed, harnessed, with him, in one royal scythe-cart,
Of one self-guise, stand the lord's foster-brethren,
Two strong fore-fighters, Camog and Morfran,
Sons to old champions of dead king Cunobelin.
Bears, neath his tunic, royal Togodumnos,
Manannan's plate, before his martial breast.
Nor might, of three, Cunobelin's son be known,
Save that, somewhat, his stature theirs exceeds ;
And Verulam's champions fence the warlord's chariot.
Was this by counsel of divine Manannan,
(Who dreamed, befel blue Britons' king, some hurt,)
That were unwist the warlord, which he is !
A whirlwind Togodumnos, where he rides,
Seems. He his ivory-helved whip cedes to Camog,
The supple reins to Morfran ; and those brethren
Both furiously drive, then, forth the royal steeds.
And, aye, their lord incites them, with great voice,
Hurling, with each high hand, far-flying javelins,
That lightnings seem. Now hath he wounded Sabine,

Vespasian's brother ; whom the Roman legate,
Set o'er the late-come wings of Gaulish horse.
Sabine, (pierced in the thigh,) his war-steed cast :
And fell, from off the noble Roman's head,
Bronze helm and eagle-crest ; and Togodumnos,
The looks descried of Flavius, surnamed Sabine !
A friend, whom he, before, had known in Rome ;
(When, lately, he was there, for king Cunobelin :)
Also, in Rome's great city, Sabine was
Their *ductor* ; and before the Roman Senate.
That seeing ! blue Britons' warlord turned his scythe-cart ;
Loud crying ; Do no man injury, unto yond Roman !
Whilst woad-stained Britons, in loose ordinance,
Valorous, withstand the poise of plate-clad legions ;
Certain Batavian foot, by sudden course,
Hoping, to occupy the four-wheel wains,
Wherein much prey of golden ornaments,
And women-wights, rush from an hollow ground.
But naught wives, of the fathers, of their babes,
(That strive in battle-field,) to look on death,
Abashed ; let flee, from spended bows, rife shafts ;
Or hurl, like warriors, from their thill-boards, darts.

Down-leapt, their Briton hounds, with a deep throat;
They fight with men, and on their spears, they bleed!
In that, there fortuned an unlooked-for case:
Scythe-carts of Kent, which journeyed had, all night;
Whom Rutupiœan young lord, Heroidel, leads,
(Forerunning they the king Caratacus,
Who cometh on, with much foot, of all East-march,)
Arriving, in that point; though man and horse
Come weary, yet infixt their dreadful hooks,
They on Batavians hurl, with furious glaives;
And them o'erriding smite, and pierce with javelins.
Victory o'erflitteth, with uncertain wing,
This battle in wide field, with double face.
First beat back Golam, lord of Moridunion,
Thick harnessed soldiers of Hispanic legion.
But, sith, prevail stout cohorts of Vespasian.
When now high noon, wax weary the cart-teams.

In this, three hundred horse arrived to Romans!
By hap. Had they, which parted were, from Sabine,
Night-time, in thirteen ships, on the dark seas;
Holding no certain course, sith, to Longport,
Come in: whence ridden, hastily, upland forth,
Aye following footprints of the forepast legions;

They, midst great woods, in mist, (which seemed on those
High antique boughs to seize,) were, two days, lost.
But seen hill-beacon-flames, they made new speed;
And resting only at dawn, to bait their steeds,
Raught to this field; whereas, they suddenly, fetched
A compass, issue, at the blue Britons' backs!
Now on valorous Dobuni, fall their rushing spears:
Whose prince, Bodvocos, on that part, uneath,
The legions' brunt, sustains; with few caterfs.
Were, by whose coming, the spirits of labouring Romans,
Refreshed: so that did make foot-weary soldiers,
Many against few, new onset, on blue Britons.
On what part, hostile to Cunobelin's house,
Of Belges' league, Vigantios, faintly, fights;
(Who, traitorous nephew of old Commius, is
Now of intelligence with false Cogidubnos.)
And they recoil now, first, of all blue Britons!
Before a foreign foe, withdrawing foot:
Turned then their backs, yield Britain's foster-earth!
For was Cunobelin's martial son far-off;
Who makes wide breaches, with his bloody cart,
In Roman ranks, in sight of blue caterfs.
Fight, with sharp breast-pikes and their very teeth,

His long-maned steeds, and with their brazen hooves ;
Gainst plate-clad soldiers, mounting on their shields.
The king seeks, everywhere, the Romans' duke ;
Desirous, with his javelin, him to pierce.
But when a new great clamour marked the sire ;
And empty scythe-carts, drawn of frighted steeds,
Come from far field ; he hastily gathered bands,
Of spears, strong manhood of the Isle upleads.
Headlong, outhurling darts, drives Togodumnos ;
Horrid his glittering battle-chariots,
With enemies' nodding jowls and spouting blood !
And where, most, din rings, of man-slaying bronze,
Rush his shrill-whirling scythe-wheels ; and now fall,
On, triple, stedfast bronze-clad Romans' front !
Shudders Earth's breast, with tumult terrible,
Of them that give and receive, wounds and death :
Neighings and prancings, rushing of strong steeds !
After him, hurl blue footmen, six caterfs ;
Running with immense brunt ! whose shielded ranks,
Like surging billow, that, now, kicks the shore,
And casts the pebbles forth, fall on thick Romans :
But, as the surge ebbs, soon, is spent their force !
Was then, ran Gorran, who the king's cup bears,
At Verulam ; and brake through much battle-press :
So, swift-foot, came to the Dumnonian bands ;

And prudent Morag finds, son to Duneda.
That valorous, having, now, much Gaulish horse
Repulsed; to noble Kowain leaves, sustain
The battle, with his strength of blue caterfs;
And hastes, where Gorran shows him, with swift scythe-carts,
And succour of light runners, hurling javelins;
And taking, with him, other three caterfs,
Which he reserved, apart, with cries, they pass.
Men marvel see run, yonder, from the wains;
Where, ere, had their winged shafts, Batavians pierced,
A furious scour of women-warriors!
And shriek those, as they run, unto their men,
Die glorious! and shine arms, in their white hands:
And even, of some, the virile knees, compress
Swift steeds! which those had caught, of broken carts.
Other, fleet-foot, knit madding wounded horse,
With wain-chains, and with reins of gravelled chariots;
And given them, of a certain herb, to eat;
With new main cries, they chace more furious forth!
Those fallen, with great head, on a triple legion,
Tread Romans down; and burst their foremost rank:
Whose dukes behold those wifemen, in amaze!
Deeming them Scythians, one-papped women-warriors;

Women, that smitten, rise up, from the earth ;
And desperately contend, again, to death.
Beyond them, hurl those ensigns, and the squadrons
Of Morag, with dread shout ! With fury, invade
They, Romans' long ranged front ; and roll in blood.
To other part, then passed king Togodumnos,
Who fight, sith dawn ; and yet they taste no meat,
Gin languish ; and look Britons oft and Romans,
On the sun's course ! Prayed the sire Togodumnos,
Then Belin, haste his setting ; or infuse,
In Briton steeds and warriors, a new force!
Or, else, might soon arrive Caratacus.
And, with that thought, the warlord sends out scouts,
Eastward, to an hill-ground, which looks far forth.

Printed by T. and A. CONSTABLE, Printers to His Majesty
at the Edinburgh University Press

00053588

Digitized with financial assistance from
Shri Brihad Bhartiya Samaj
on 11 March, 2020